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Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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AGRICULTURE AT CAMBRIDGE.

VERY few of the new institutions of the country have advanced as quickly and with so much efficiency as the Agricultural Department at Cambridge University. The idea originated in the mind of that most typical country gentleman, Mr. Henry Chaplin, who first gave expression to it in 1890. Thanks chiefly to the generosity of the Drapers' Company the suggestion in 1899 fructified into the permanent endowment of a Chair of Agriculture, of which the first occupant was Dr. William Somerville. A farm for experimental purposes was provided at Impington by Mr. Macfarlane Grieve of Clare College, who gave the use of 140 acres of land rent free for nine years. Thus set on foot, the movement went on from strength to strength. A commodious school was built, and a new farm of 230 acres, situated close to the town, has been leased from Trinity and Clare Colleges. More important than the material advance is the interest that the department has excited. The number of students has doubled, and they nearly all come from the most desirable class. Undoubtedly this is largely due to the fame which Cambridge has justly won as a centre of scientific research. Never before was the reputation of the University higher in this respect, and the work done is of a kind to appeal strongly to those who own land or are engaged in its cultivation. Our own columns have often

borne eloquent witness to the work, because in the difficult problems that arise from time to time in connection, either directly or indirectly, with land and sport, we have appealed, and never in vain, to the learning of Cambridge. Is it a mysterious disease affecting animals that may be valuable in themselves, or may be valueless, but possess the power to spread infection?—the authorities are quickly on its track. Thus when a menace of plague threw its black shadow over the country the biological authorities there were the first to describe and figure the particular flea, which, after being parasitic to the plague-stricken rat, often carries infection to man. A disease of bees broke out in the Isle of Wight, and before the Whitehall Board of Agriculture began to stir, its symptoms, nature and treatment were studied at Cambridge. Recently a bee-house has been erected for the purpose of carrying further the research into the Isle of Wight disease. We have frequently complained that the Board of Agriculture has not done all it should in making scientific investigation; but true though that may be, it must also be admitted with equal freedom that the Board has done the next best thing in exercising a wise liberality towards the Cambridge School of Agriculture.

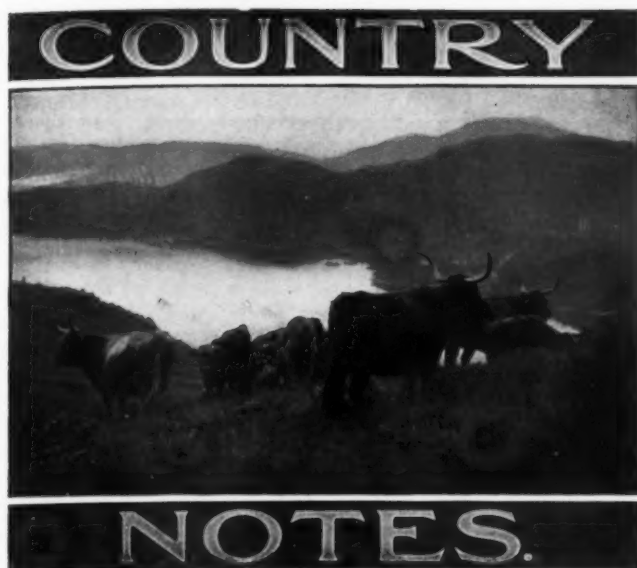
With equal vigour other problems are being attacked. There is little need to remind our readers of the work done by Professor Biffen in his experiments with cereal breeding. It is no light obstacle that he has to overcome. An ideal wheat for the cultivator must combine the two qualities of strength and prolificacy. Unfortunately they are seldom found together. Red Fife is a most satisfactory baker's wheat, but its yield is relatively so small that it will not suit the requirements of a farmer who needs quantity as much as quality. It was in search of light for his own studies that Professor Biffen made the pilgrimage over the best wheat areas, of which we are so fortunate as to secure the account which appears in the adjoining pages. He did not go out like an official estimator to form a guess at the yield, but to see for himself what varieties of wheat the farmer grew and what results he obtained. In a future issue we hope he will give our readers a detailed account of his own experiences as a wheat-grower in 1911, and especially a statement of the returns available from the crosses which, it is hoped, will unite the baking value of the Red Fife with the prolificacy of Square Head's Master. Wheat-breeding is comparatively a new science, and much is to be hoped from it. Professor Wood, who superintends the experiments with animals, is walking on more heavily-trodden ground. For hundreds of years successive generations have tried to improve our farm animals. No doubt those who have superintended the crossing have only been practical men with little or no theoretical knowledge, and unwitting of the Mendelian rules; but they managed to achieve results which the Mendelians will find it difficult to improve upon. Professor Wood is performing service which is as valuable for the farmer as it is brilliant, since he is helping to reduce to rule and order what previously was only tentative guesswork.

Forestry is under the capable guidance of Professor Augustine Henry, and it is no more than a plain statement of facts to say that the influence of the teaching at Cambridge is producing remarkable results in the neighbouring counties and far beyond them. Of the work done in entomology, and the manner in which its importance is recognised, it is unnecessary to speak. Perhaps it may not be out of place to mention that last week, when visiting the Agricultural School at Cambridge, the present writer met a young enthusiast who was devoting the leisure of his vacation to a microscopic study of the crops of birds, with a view to determining their usefulness or otherwise to the farmer. Many other investigations are going on. The chemical department is working on various analyses; experiments are being conducted in connection with tick-borne diseases of cattle; Mr. Marshall is investigating the effects of castration and spaying of pigs and sheep. Soil surveys are being conducted in the Eastern Counties. In the botany department investigations are in progress on silver-leaf disease. It will thus be seen that the Cambridge School of Agriculture is one of the most living of educational centres.

Our Portrait Illustration.

THE frontispiece is a portrait of Lady Cecily Browne, whose engagement to the Hon. Thomas Vesey is announced. Lady Cecily Browne is the younger daughter of the Earl of Kenmare.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



THE reflection after the strike is that if our legislators are worth their salt, they will concentrate all their energies on the discovery of some feasible means of settling trade disputes. It is now universally admitted that of all methods striking is the most barbarous, the most costly and in every way the most injurious. It inflicts so many hardships that it is difficult to say who is hardest hit—the middle-class, the working-class, or the capitalist. It stirs up the very worst passions of the mob, and has forced us to witness scenes of riot and bloodshed that ought to have been avoidable. To say that this state of things is inevitable would be cowardly. Greater grievances have been remedied and greater difficulties overcome. If workers have a sound cause for complaint, the theatre in which their wrongs should be redressed is a court of law; and if there is no court of law at present exactly suitable for this purpose, it is not too late to invent one constituted on the old principle that every offender should be tried by a jury of his peers.

Earlier than usual the hop-pickers are beginning to wend their way by road and train to Kent, and we hope that our readers will not forget to supply them with any light literature they can spare. The reason for the sudden migration is that hops this year have ripened at least ten days before the usual time of picking. From the annual report of Messrs. Le May we learn that "the hops are fully matured and are full of lupulin, and we are of the opinion that the quality this year of the English growth will be the best we have had for many years." The quantity will not be so satisfactory, and as we use about 600,000cwt., of which we grow only half, anxiety will naturally be felt as to the state of the crops at our sources of supply. Germany this year will have none to export; in fact, she is importing, because the hops have suffered so much from the heat. America now exceeds any other country in the consumption of beer, and therefore will have few hops to spare for export. All this means that the English grower is likely to receive better prices than he has had for some years. Messrs. Le May say that "there will be a good demand for the early arrivals," so that a portion at least of the growth may be sold as soon as it is picked at very satisfactory prices. This is rendered still more certain by the fact that the stocks of 1909 and 1910 are now exhausted.

The names of the members of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the working of the Railway Conciliation Scheme were given to the House of Commons on Monday. The Chairman is Sir David Harrel, who, between 1893 and 1902 was Permanent Under-Secretary for Ireland, a post which does not bring its holder prominently before the public. He has had experience of arbitration, however, and his record may inspire confidence. Sir Thomas Ratcliffe Ellis, Mr. Charles Gabriel Beale and Mr. John Burnett are well known within certain circles, but not to the outsider. Mr. Arthur Henderson was Chairman of the Labour Party in the House of Commons. If confidence is felt in the Commission, it is not on account of their conspicuous public services, but because those who made the appointment took counsel from all parties concerned, and therefore are likely to have fixed on members who will be generally acceptable.

The inability of Mr. Fry to undertake the tour to Australia arranged by the M.C.C. is, from a run-getting point of view, a sad blow to cricket-lovers in this country, while it is certain

that on the other side his decision will be greatly regretted. Fortunately, Mr. Warner, to whom the post of leader has now been offered, has already proved himself a popular and successful captain on Australian grounds, so that no fears upon that score need be entertained. Mr. Jessop and Hitch have been invited to fill the last two places. The selection of the latter as the fast bowler is one that will meet with ready approval, and he is, moreover, a batsman who may at times score very freely. Comment on the choice of Mr. Jessop is needless, for, despite a certain number of failures with the bat this season, no opposing side can look upon victory as secure until he has twice been sent back to the pavilion, and he still probably saves more runs on the off-side than any man in the world. Of the strength of the team as a whole there can be no question, while the management could not possibly be in better hands than those of Mr. Tom Pawley.

In connection with Professor Biffen's report on the harvest, no doubt many readers will turn to the report on the nutritive value of bread by Dr. J. M. Hamill, which has been issued by the Local Government Board. To us the document appears to be singularly feeble and futile. It amounts to no more than the truism that a consumer should select the bread that he can most easily digest, whether it be "patent," "entire," wheat, oatmeal, or "germ." The writer then propounds the wise-acre question—If a man lives wholly on bread, what is the best bread for him?—and goes on to say that he should not live wholly on bread, but vary his diet with other things. Dr. Hamill has missed the point at issue, which is the distinction between "hard" and "strong" wheats. Even experts frequently talk as though every hard wheat were also strong wheat, whereas it is nothing of the kind. A hard wheat, as its name implies, is one with a steel-like exterior. A strong wheat is one which makes what the housewife calls a "good-rising" flour. Many hard wheats will not rise, and produce a dumpy loaf, which, in spite of what the expert of the Local Government Board says, nearly everybody in this world finds indigestible.

LINES.

I carry in my arms full sheaves
Of blossoms plucked in some dim garden close.
The way thither none knows
Save I. All carpeted with fallen leaves
It is, which are but memories
Frail, fugitive and sweet,
Dropped silently from my soul's orchard trees,
Which I disturb with lingering slow feet.

MARGARET SACKVILLE.

Happily for Ireland, the end of the strike synchronised with the opening of the Dublin Horse Show, and the usual stream of visitors has not been arrested. The show, in fact, continually tends to increase in importance with the improved position of Irish agriculture. It already rivals the Highland and Agricultural Show, and breeders know that cattle of as good quality are exhibited there as in any other part of the Empire. But, of course, its distinguishing feature continues to be equine, for it is the nature of the Irishman to love a horse. Perhaps some of the visitors will come to the conclusion that this love does not stop short of idolatry, since it is so great that the jaunting-car still prevails over the taxi-cab in the streets of Dublin.

A great deal of sad nonsense has found its way into the papers in regard to the effect of the drought on wild life, especially partridges. There is nothing that likes sunshine and a light soil better than the partridge, and it is safe to say that the bird has not suffered in the slightest degree from the prolonged spell of dry weather. The real danger to it lies in the sudden and local thunder-storms, which have broken in upon the fine weather at times and produced floods and acres of wet herbage. Animals like hares, rabbits, mice and moles have probably suffered far more from thirst this year than partridges. As a rule they drink very little, if at all, the reason being that they are accustomed to feed on the dewy herbage of the early morning. But a characteristic of the August nights we have been having is that, although beautifully clear and starry, they have been practically dewless. Apparently the moisture was completely sucked out of the earth, and so the grass was as dry at four o'clock in the morning as at four o'clock in the afternoon.

In a literal sense the most irritating of all the strikes was that of the scavengers at Liverpool, who at the time of writing are still standing out for more wages. They demand thirty shillings for bin and ash men, and twenty-seven shillings for

ordinary scavengers. When we said that this demand was irritating it was not meant to imply any reflection on the strikers, but only that the omission to cart the refuse away from the streets has had the effect of encouraging the breeding of countless flies. A correspondent on the spot says: "Every spot is infested with them. Even clothiers' shops—not ordinarily troubled with such visitors—have been as full as a butcher's shop on a hot Sunday, and the side streets in the slums have swarmed with them." The strike of the scavengers will not have been altogether in vain if it draws the attention of the inhabitants of Liverpool to the necessity of organising a campaign against the fly.

One thing, more or less to the good, among much which is lamentable that the fiery drought of the summer in the South of England brought to our gardens, is a proof and test of those species of flowers which endure the dry weather most patiently. The salpiglossis, statice and others of the annuals have withstood the worst of the drought as if they did not greatly mind it, while some herbaceous things, on the other hand, such as the phloxes, have made no head against it at all. They have not seemed to try. The flower that of all others appears to have revelled in it all is nicotiana. In the beautiful warm evenings its star-like white flowers have expanded gloriously, after drooping all day, with closed petals, and the scent with which they have filled the still night air has been delicious. Considering all the circumstances, the roses have done well, though their bloom has been very short-lived. The azaleas have been badly shrivelled, and even the rhododendrons have been looking as if they had very little pleasure in life. The times have been hard enough for most of our floral friends.

The reference in one of the newspapers to the carillon at Cattistock in Dorset, which is played upon once a year in August by the *Carillonneur* of Mechlin Cathedral, is unfair to the English makers, who have effected as much improvement in the mechanism of their instruments as English organ-builders have with theirs. A carillon, of course, is a peal of bells which are not hung on wheels, but on a frame, so that they may be sounded automatically or by means of a keyboard like that of a pianoforte. It is only in comparatively recent times that England has taken an interest in carillons; but this country has the credit of inventing and perfecting the modern mechanism, by which the player or the machine has complete control over the bells, so that the tune is not retarded before the striking of the larger bells, to produce the irregular "stuttering" effect which is noticeable in many Continental chimes. Carillons have been set up in Dublin and Worcester Cathedrals, the Royal Exchange, Shoreditch Church and in the Manchester Town Hall, where, as at Cattistock, there is a keyboard as well as the mechanical contrivance.

The annual report of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings is a most satisfactory document. During the past year attention has been given to nearly three hundred buildings threatened by "restoration," and detailed accounts are given of a considerable number in which enquiry has been followed by successful action. The most cheering feature of the situation is the increasing readiness with which the clergy and the owners of secular buildings voluntarily seek the society's advice and aid. For many years the "Anti-scrape," as it is affectionately called, was regarded as a meddlesome body that sought to prevent people doing what they liked with their own. That attitude, however, is moribund, and justly so, for of no society can it be more faithfully said that by its works is it known. In these matters shrill denunciation is not enough; practical advice and alternative schemes are required. Not only does the society provide them, but it also directly undertakes works of repair in accordance with the principles for which it stands. There are now many architects who work under its aegis, and the more buildings the society repairs, the more readily will building owners see the reasonableness of the demands it makes on behalf of our ancient monuments. The society, moreover, is doing much to disarm criticism by its sympathetic attitude towards the adaptation of ancient buildings to workaday uses, so far as is consistent with the preservation not only of architectural interest, but of all ancient qualities and characteristics, and especially of the evidences of change and growth.

Where so many buildings have been saved from vandal alterations it is difficult to particularise. Special satisfaction, however, may be expressed at the repair of the exquisite leaded spire of East Harling Church, which is unique in richness of design. Edstaston Church has been well dealt with, and the plague of ivy removed. The whole of the works here cost only

three hundred and twenty-three pounds, instead of four hundred pounds estimated. In connection with the question of cost the case of Branscombe Church, Devon, is illuminating. The society's estimate for its necessary repair amounted only to fifteen hundred pounds, while the architect appointed by the Vicar proposed to spend two thousand pounds. It is important to emphasise the fact that the right sort of repair is generally much less expensive than the wrong sort of "restoration." Among the public bodies which have sought the society's aid are the Salvation Army for Hadleigh Castle, and among private owners the Duke of Devonshire for Hardwick Old Hall and Lord De L'Isle and Dudley for Penshurst Place. With all classes of the community recognising the value of the society's work, its power for good will increase rapidly. To all who love England's heritage in building it may be said that a guinea subscription cannot be better employed, the more so as the whole of the last year's work was done for less than three hundred and fifty pounds. Surely a record in economy.

Many alterations in our food supply have sprung out of the necessity of making considerable changes to meet an emergency. It will not be wonderful if the delivery of fish at Billingsgate Wharf which took place last week becomes an ordinary event. It had the effect of giving London a supply of beautifully fresh fish, and there seems no particular reason why the trawlers should choose a carrier to send the fruit of their labours to Grimsby, necessitating a long and hot railway journey before the fish are available in London. Last week the trawlers brought two hundred tons of fish, and there seems no particular reason why they should not make this a regular practice. Fish would surely keep better in the hold of a sea vessel than in a railway truck, and in point of expedition the trawler delivering at Billingsgate ought to be in very nearly as good a position as the one unloading at Grimsby.

SUPERANNUATED.

Thaay calls I a daft auld daddy, thaay does,
And laughs vit to bust at I.
Maybe, you've a'noticed it Miss, yerself,
As you med ha' bin passin' by.
I be Auld Methusaley up to the varm,
But bless their dear hearts, thaay doan't mean no harm.

I zets about in the zun most days,
And watches the volk go by,
And the mothers sez as I spoils the bairns,
And wunt let um taalk to I.
But maaids beant women, and bwoys beant men.
Um must be vrolicsome now and then.

When you've knocked about in the world zo long
As you'm almost too tired to die,
Maybe you'll zee more zense in the words
Uv a zawny auld vule like I.
Shadows lies long as the zun goes down,
And zummer be gone when the leaves be brown.

REGINALD ARKELL.

In the very interesting article on forestry in Norway which Mr. Burt Meyer contributes to the new number of the *Journal of the Board of Agriculture*, incidental reference is made to the vast increase in prices that has taken place within the last half-century. In 1873 the Norwegian Government purchased 20 acres of land at 18s. per acre. This area was increased until 2,500 acres had been obtained at a total cost of £4,600. Ten years later 275 acres of similar land were purchased at a cost of 30s. an acre. Up to 1906 a total of 8,000 acres had been bought; but it is difficult to work out the average price, because a quantity of it was nursery land at £60 an acre. The point missed out of the article is the economic one. What the landowner who thinks of planting wants to know is the total expense which would include the value of the land, of the labour, of the trees, manure and so on, with the addition of compound interest, the time at which a return could be expected and the amount of that return. We have looked at many forestry accounts without finding these facts clearly stated.

There is one attractive and already very local little bird, the Dartford warbler, which the conditions of the present year will have gone far towards exterminating. It is a lover of the gorse, so much so that it may almost be said that gorse bushes and brakes are its sole habitat. The gorse is a plant of the wild, which has been becoming more restricted year by year for a very long while past. This dry summer there have been quite an unprecedented number of gorse and heath fires. They must

have burnt out many of the habitations of the Dartford warbler, which will now see these birds no more. Another cause of the disappearance both of these bushes and of their tenants is the establishment of big camps of Territorial and other troops in the comparatively few wild and open spaces remaining. On the top of Ashdown Forest, for instance, this very year, there has been a large Territorial camp which has levelled a gorse clump in which these warblers used to nest, and incidentally has quite put an end, we may suppose, to any chance of the return of the Montagu's harriers which used to come there in the summer.

We have news of yet another vessel, passing out through the Strait of Belle Isle on the north side of Newfoundland, coming into contact with an iceberg, and there seems to be no doubt that the ice is floating down this year in the Polar Current

in greater than normal quantity. This is just what previous experience would lead us to expect, because last year was more free of ice than any that have preceded it for a long while. Naturally, this movement of the Polar ice has a great effect on the temperature of the sea in the latitude of our own islands and further south, and is indirectly a cause of weather changes and of differences of atmospheric temperature also. It has further been claimed as one at least of the determining causes in the movements of salmon about our shores and in our rivers, whether directly or merely as it determines the movements in the sea of those herring shoals which the salmon are thought to follow. This chain of cause and effect, if it is yet to be called so, is chiefly conspicuous, perhaps, for the absence of its links; but there is some reason to hope that it will lead to conclusions less purely conjectural than some of them have to remain at present.

THE WHEAT HARVEST OF 1911.

BY PROFESSOR R. H. BIFFEN.

THE harvest season of 1911, even early in the summer, promised to be one of unusual interest to everyone concerned with the cereal crops. Sowing was carried out under moderately good conditions in the autumn of 1910, but was followed by excessively wet weather, so wet, in fact, that even on lightish soils water lay on the land right through the winter. A heavy autumn rainfall is usually admitted to be bad for the wheat crops. In fact, from a knowledge of the autumn rainfall it is generally possible to forecast with approximate accuracy the average yield of wheat the following harvest, at all events in the Eastern Counties of England. The winter was unusually mild, and frosts capable of doing much damage to the wheat crop did not occur. However, the crop made little progress, probably on account of the water-logged condition of the soil. The coming of spring found a plant which, on the whole, was thin and patchy. Then followed a drought of altogether exceptional severity, especially in East Anglia. April was a dry month. In the middle of May one

good day's rain fell in the fenlands, there were a few slight showers in June which were barely sufficient to damp the surface of the soil, and since then there has been practically no rainfall. Under these conditions, wheat and the other corn crops matured very rapidly. A low yield might well have been expected, yet the general opinion is that the wheat crop is a good one. In most districts it is said, indeed, to be well over the general average.

In order to obtain first-hand evidence of the real position of affairs, I have recently visited some of the best and some of the worst parts of East Anglia, that being the chief wheat-growing area of this country. As far as practicable in the limited time the harvest lasted, the attempt was made to see the crops on various types of soils. The range here is a very wide one, embracing the fenlands, gravels of various types, boulder clay, chalk, gault and green-sand. It will be impossible to give any detailed account of the differences on each of these formations until further information has been obtained with



THE LAST ROUND.

regard to the actual yields per acre, and for the present nothing more will be attempted than a general survey of the crops of the whole district. The outstanding feature of the season was, of course, the extreme earliness of the harvest. In the southern parts of Cambridge, on light gravel and chalk soils, cutting was in progress early in the third week of July, the wheat then being practically dead ripe. Here and there crops were threshed in the field, and the last Saturday of the month saw samples of the current season's growth offered for sale with immediate delivery in the corn markets. Broadly speaking, the harvest grew steadily later as one went further North, except where patches of hot, sandy soil, as, for instance, on the margins of Brandon and Swaffham heaths, intervened. It was latest on the northern coast of Norfolk, a good deal of wheat being still uncut in the second week of August, while some of the spring wheat was far from fit even then.

On many of the farms in this district the usual order of cutting was reversed, and the barley was cut before the wheat. The next striking feature was the shortness of the harvest. This means much in East Anglia, where the common custom is to pay the labourers, both home and imported, a fixed sum, whether the harvest proves short or long. The custom, on the whole, works well, though a dragging harvest often means discontent among the workers.

In the Fens to the north of Cambridge cutting was general by July 31st. Perhaps more often than not this is a specially trying operation here. The rich, black soils, with an abundance of water just below the surface, encourage heavy crops and a rank growth of straw, which is readily beaten to the ground. With luck it may be cut with a machine "one way," but often hand cutting has to be resorted to, and one hears direful stories of the crop costing a guinea an acre to cut. This season the straw, on the whole, stood wonderfully well. Everything possessing any resemblance to a reaper was brought out and pressed into use, with the result that in a single morning's journey one could see everything in the way of reaping machinery, from the newest of self-binders to machines which made one think of the Rev. Mr. Bell's (of Carmylie) early invention. Warm southerly winds dried the sheaves rapidly, and the ricks went up in record time, in spite of the almost unbearable heat.



RAW MATERIAL FOR NEW VARIETIES OF WHEAT.

There is a general consensus of opinion that the yield in the Fens is well over the average. Certainly the crops, both before and after cutting, looked very promising. The ears were well set, there was practically no disease and the sheaves handled well. The verdict of the threshing-machine still has to be awaited, though, and reports as to the actual yields are

too scanty to give very reliable information. Such as they are, they agree with the impressions one formed in the fields, and if the crop in Fenland does not turn out from three to five per cent. over the average many will be disappointed. This, together with the ease with which the harvest has been gathered



A CROP OF HYBRID WHEATS AT CAMBRIDGE.

home, will help to compensate for other less satisfactory crops, though it will not make up for some of the troublous years experienced of late.

In Norfolk and Suffolk the crops gave the impression that the yield was about the average, though the tendency among the farmers was to put them at a bushel or two over the average. Near the coasts, particularly in Norfolk, the crops were better than in the more inland districts. In Essex the crop was more variable than in the other counties. On many of the heavy clay farms the wheat made a grand show, and many pieces should easily thresh out at fifty-six to sixty bushels to the acre. The presence of a rather large number of light crops made it

difficult to come to any general conclusions. Setting good against bad, it seemed probable that the yield for the county was just over average. Wherever questions as to the quality of the crop were asked, the answer was always the same—"Excellent," or words to that effect. Certainly the grain was hard, dry, absolutely free from sprouting, and usually plump and well filled. These signs are all good; but those expecting high prices on the ground of high quality are doomed to disappointment. It does not follow that because grain is hard, its "strength," the feature the millers and bakers prize most, is great. Good as this season's wheat may be, as compared with that of recent seasons, it is considerably inferior in "strength" to much of the grain the millers have to import nowadays. It is difficult to gauge quality, for definite standards of comparison are wanting; but I think that one may fairly state the position by saying that the bulk of this season's crop is about as good as an average sample of the old variety Lammas.

More kinds of wheat were met with in these Eastern Counties than I anticipated. The commonest everywhere was Square Head's Master, a wheat which seems to succeed on any type of soil on which wheat can be grown. Next in order of quantity was the white-chaffed Browick wheat. This dense-

headed wheat compares very favourably with the former sort. It crops well, particularly in Northern Norfolk, where it probably yields better than Square Head's Master, and the standing capacity of its straw is almost all one could wish for. At the Norfolk Experimental Station at Snoring, where a considerable number of sorts were being tested, this looked to be, if not



LITTLE'S ANTI-MILDEW—AN OLD FENLAND WHEAT.

or wrongly, believing that they lack the vigour of the red wheats. Rivett wheat was only found in quantity in Essex, though occasional fields of it were seen everywhere except in the fenlands. On the stiff soils of Essex this wheat is especially at home, and produces crops which make the average for the whole country seem paltry. Yields of seven quarters to the acre are by no means rare, and with intensive culture still more can be obtained; in fact, I have heard of, though never seen, a ten-quarter crop. Why it is not more generally grown is a fact difficult to account for. Comparisons made at various experimental stations show that, on soils of the moderately heavy type, it is the heaviest yielding of all wheats. It stands well, and its late ripening habit is not, as a rule, a disadvantage. It is true that the grain does not bring quite so high a price as other English wheats, but the loss per quarter is more than compensated for by the high yields. For the small holder, and possibly in an increasing degree for the larger farmer, Rivett is especially suitable, on account of the fact that the ubiquitous sparrow usually refrains from attacking it. Many of the crops seen showed strikingly the sparrow's objection to bearded ears. Here and there stray plants of beardless wheats had found their way into the crop, and the sparrows had stripped every grain from them.

In addition to these well-known sorts, smaller quantities of several others were seen. The commonest of these were the

actually the best, one of the two best in the series. Stand Up White was seen in fair abundance in the Fens, where it is somewhat of a favourite on account of its short straw. It is doubtful, though, whether as much is grown now as was a few seasons since, for there is a certain amount of prejudice against white wheats, many farmers, rightly

"French wheats"—a class name for a number of distinct wheats coming for the most part indirectly from Vilmorin's of Paris. Their original names have been either changed entirely or attempts have been made to Anglicise them. These wheats have been rather extensively pushed in East Anglia, but their cultivation is not so general as one might infer from the accounts appearing in some of the agricultural papers. The only sort which could be found at all commonly was Red Marvel (Japhet). This may be planted either as an autumn or spring wheat, and for the latter purpose there does not seem to be much doubt of its value. Whether it gives better crops than spring-sown Nursery wheat does not appear to be known, and one of the experimental stations in the district might usefully investigate this point. As seen growing, Red Marvel is not an attractive crop. The straw is not especially good, it is often badly rusted, and the whole field looks so dingy and grey that one can pick the sort out with certainty even from the window of a railway carriage. The crop, however, is generally a fairly good one, but the quality of the grain is not satisfactory. Some millers will buy it, but there is a distinct tendency to refuse it when other sorts are available. Of the other French wheats little can be said at present. All I have seen were being grown on for seed. Yields under such conditions are deceptive, for the best land and the best cultivation are reserved for the crop. Still, the figures so obtained, if garnished with a good supply of adjectives, make a good basis for the seeds catalogue. At the Norfolk Experimental Farm a useful experiment had been planned to



RIVETT'S CONE.

test the value of several of these varieties under ordinary farming conditions. Unfortunately, bad conditions at planting-time were followed by the attacks of rooks, and it will probably be necessary to repeat the trials. Such experiments are a great boon to the farmer, even should he be sceptical of the need of "scientific farming," for they provide him with an opportunity



SQUARE HEAD'S MASTER.



STAND UP WHITE.



LITTLE JOSS.

of estimating the real value of these introductions without going to the expense of trying them on his own land. Few things have impressed me more this harvest than the necessity for such trials, if only to prevent such well-known wheats as Stand Up White and Square Heads from masquerading under other names.

In Essex the Dutch wheat, *Wilhelmina*, was frequently met with. At harvest-time it has some resemblance to White Chaff Browick. The dense ears are carried on good stiff straw and all rise to precisely the same height, so giving the crop a beautifully level appearance. The yield, too, on varying sorts of soil, seemed to be considerable, but the quality, as far as one could judge from rubbed out samples, was hardly as good as that of our English wheats.

After the crops had been cleared the stubble throughout was in a cleaner condition than it was a few years since. Weeds, though still too plentiful, are being kept under more and more, and there can be little doubt that our farms are gradually becoming clearer. The earliness of the harvest will give a longer season for cleaning the land and lead in turn to better crops next year. Where seeds had been sown under the corn crops, however, the stubbles were generally far too bare. Clover plants could often be found only after careful searching, and the rye-grass, where it had come up at all, was burnt to a dull purple

well worthy of the attention of connoisseurs. The number of entries was considerably above the average, and the quality very much so. Most admiration was bestowed on the hunters, Mr. Hugh Boal's ten year old chestnut, Sweet John, standing out as one of the best ever shown in Dublin. The cups and medals were awarded as follows: Mr. N. J. Kelly, Kilsallaghan, County Dublin, with his Olympian Park, took the Perpetual Challenge Cup and medal for the best thorough-bred yearling colt bred in Ireland and owned by the exhibitor. Similar honours for the best thorough-bred filly shown under the same conditions were awarded to Mr. James Ballesty, Mullingar. Mr. Thomas Plunkett, with his chestnut, Yankæ, carried off the Perpetual Challenge Cup for the best thorough-bred mare with foal at foot owned by exhibitor resident in Ireland. Sweet John, above mentioned, got a first in the class for weight-carrying hunters. Olympian Park proved to be the best thorough-bred yearling colt. In the class for four year old mares or geldings, Mr. Edward Walsh came out first with his chestnut gelding, Sir Denis. In the class for thorough-bred stallions intended for getting weight-carrying hunters, the first prize was awarded to Spey Royal, the property of Mr. J. J. Stafford, Waterford. Mr. Ballesty took a corresponding prize for thorough-bred yearling fillies with his chestnut, Alannah. In the class



NEARING THE END OF THE HARVEST.

colour. The fierce baking the unshaded soil has been exposed to since the removal of the crops will not improve matters, and unless a plentiful rainfall sets in much patching with trifolium will be necessary this season.

DUBLIN HORSE SHOW.

EXCEPT that several of the industrial exhibits were not in their places, there was nothing to show any traces of the strike when the Dublin Horse Show was opened at Ball's Bridge on Tuesday morning. Beautiful weather favoured it in spite of the amount of rain that has been experienced on this side of the Channel. The event of the morning was the visit of the Lord-Lieutenant, who, accompanied by the American Ambassador and Mrs. Whitelaw Reid, with many other distinguished visitors, made an inspection of the prize-winning horses. The exhibition was

for hunters up to twelve or thirteen stone there were no fewer than seventy-four entries, so that Mr. Owen Ryan of Castlereagh is to be congratulated on his victory with his six year old bay gelding, The Pick (hunted with the Meath Hounds). There were forty-two entries for the class up to fourteen stone to eighteen stone, and here Lord Kenmare was placed first. The Croker Challenge Cup and silver medal for the best weight-carrying thorough-bred stallion went to Mr. John Gilmour, County Tyrone, for his horse, The Spook. In the double-harness classes over fifteen hands, the celebrated pair, Catalina and Woodhatch Ruth, belonging to Miss Dora Shintz of Liverpool were awarded the premier honour.

The show of horses then was one that did credit to what is, perhaps, the most horse-loving part of the King's dominions. On the first day it brought together a good audience of those who had a particular interest in the exhibits. It is on the later days that the general public prefers to attend the show.

LALAGE'S LOVERS



By GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM.

CHAPTER XXI.

I WAS late for luncheon, very late. My mother had left the dining-room when I got home; but I found her, and she readily agreed to leave the letters she was writing and to sit beside me while I ate. It was not, as I discovered, sympathy for my exhaustion and hunger which induced her to do this. She was full of curiosity.

"Well," she said, as I helped myself to some cold pie, "what was it?"

"It was Lalage," I said. "You guessed that before I started." There was a short pause, during which I ate some of the cold pie and found out that it was made partly, at least, of veal. Then my mother asked another question.

"Has she hit on anything unexpected?"

"Quite. She wants Thormanby to insist on the Archdeacon marrying Miss Battersby."

Even my mother was startled. She gave utterance to an exclamation. If she had been a man she would have sworn. I soothed her.

"It's not really a bad scheme," I said, "when you get over the first shock. The Archdeacon, it appears, is bound to marry."

"Why?"

"Timothy says so, or seems to say so. Perhaps he didn't really. What is the proper, regularly received interpretation of that text which says that a bishop is to be the husband of one wife?"

"There are several."

"The Archdeacon is sure to know them, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes. He's certain to know them."

"He'll want them all this afternoon. Lalage is going to him with that text drawn in her hand. She's also taking Miss Battersby, a wedding-ring, a cake and a white satin dress. I'm speaking figuratively, of course."

"I hope so. But however figurative your way of putting it may be, I'm afraid that the Archdeacon won't be pleased."

"So I told Lalage. But she's quite certain that he will. I should say myself that he'd dislike it several degrees more than he did the simony. I often think it's a pity the Archdeacon has not any sense of humour."

"I hope Miss Battersby hasn't been told."

"Not by Lalage. She felt that there would be a certain want of delicacy about mentioning the subject to her before the Archdeacon had spoken."

My mother sighed.

"I'm very fond of Lalage," she said, "but I sometimes wish she was—"

"That's just what Miss Battersby was saying this morning. I quite agree with you both that life would be simpler if she was; but, of course, she isn't."

"What Lalage wants is some steadying influence."

"Miss Pettigrew," I said, "suggested marriage and babies. I don't think she mentioned the number of babies, but several would be required."

My mother looked at me in much the same curious way that Miss Pettigrew did on the afternoon when she and Canon Beresford visited me in Ballygore. I felt the same unpleasant sense of embarrassment. I finished my glass of claret hurriedly, and without waiting for coffee, which would probably have been cold, left the room.

I went about the house and made a collection of the articles I was likely to want during the afternoon. I got a hammock-

chair with a leg rest, four cushions, a pipe, a tin of tobacco, three boxes of matches and a novel called "Sword Play." With these in my arms I staggered across the garden and made for the nook to which I had been looking forward all day. A greenhouse which is not sacrificed to flowers is a very pleasant place at certain seasons of the year. In spring, for instance, when the sun is shining, I am tempted to go out of doors. But in spring there are cold winds which drive me in again. In a greenhouse the sun is available and the winds are excluded. If the heating apparatus is out of order, as it fortunately was in the case of my greenhouse, the temperature is warm without stuffiness. I shut the door, pulled a tree fern in a heavy pot out of my way and then found out by experiment which of the angles, of all at which a hammock-chair can be set, is the most comfortable. Then I placed my four cushions just where I like them, one under my head, one to give support to the small of my back, one under my knees and one beside my left elbow. I lit my pipe and put the three boxes of matches in different places, so that when I lost one I should, while searching for it, be pretty sure of coming on another.

I opened my novel. It was about a gentleman of title who in his day was the best swordsman in Europe. He loved a scornful lady with great devotion. I read a hundred pages with dwindling attention, and at last found that I had failed to be excited by the story of a prolonged duel fought on the brink of a precipice under the shadow of an ancient castle, from the battlements of which the scornful lady was looking down. I was vexed with myself, for I ought to have enjoyed the scene. I turned back and read the whole chapter through a second time. Again I somehow missed the emotion of it. My mind kept wandering from the lunging figures on the edge of the cliff to a vision of Lalage in a dark green dress speeding along the road on her bicycle.

I laid down the novel and set myself the pleasant task of constructing imaginary interviews between Lalage and the Archdeacon. As a rule I enjoy the meanderings of my own imagination, and in this particular case I had provided it with material to work on much more likely to be entertaining than the gambols of the expert swordsman, or the scorn of the lady above him. But my imagination failed me. It pictured Lalage well enough. But the Archdeacon, for some reason, would not take shape. I tried again and again, with no better success. The image of the Archdeacon got fainter and fainter, until I could no longer visualise even his apron.

At some time, perhaps an hour after I had settled down, I went to sleep. I cannot fix, or make any attempt at fixing, the exact moment at which the conscious effort of my imagination passed into the unconscious romance building of dream; but I know that the Archdeacon totally disappeared, while Lalage, a pleasantly stimulating personality, haunted me. I may have slept for an hour, perhaps for an hour and a-half. Looking back on the afternoon, and arranging its chronology to fit between two fixed points of time, I am certain that I did not sleep for more than an hour and a-half. It was a few minutes after two o'clock when I sat down to luncheon. I am sure of this because my mother's eyes sought the clock on the chimney-piece when we entered the dining-room together, and mine followed them. It was half-past five when I saw her again in the drawing-room. I am equally sure of this because she kissed me three times rather effusively, and I was obliged to look at my watch to hide my embarrassment. Between two o'clock and half-past five I lunched, smoked, read, slept and played a part in certain other events. This makes it tolerably certain that I did not sleep for more than an hour and a-half.

I was awakened by a most violent opening of the greenhouse door and a tempestuous rustling of the fronds of the tree fern which I had moved. Then Lalage burst upon me. My first impulse was to struggle out of my chair and offer it to her. She made a motion of excited refusal and I sank back again. I noticed, while she stood before me, that her face was unusually flushed. It seemed to me that she was passing through what McMeekin used to describe as a nerve storm. I leaped to the conclusion that the Archdeacon had not taken kindly to the idea of a marriage with Miss Battersby.

"How did it go off?" I asked.

"Where's your mother?" said Lalage.

"She's not here. You ought to know better than to expect her to be here. Is she the sort of person who'd waste an afternoon in a disused greenhouse? She's probably doing something useful. Did you ask if she was covering pots of marmalade?"

"I've searched everywhere."

"Never mind. She's certain to turn up for tea."

Lalage stamped her foot.

"I want her at once," she said. "I want to talk to her."

"I'm a very poor substitute for my mother, of course; but if you can't find her—"

"I've something to tell her," said Lalage, "something that I simply must tell to somebody."

"I shall be delighted to listen."

Lalage hesitated. She was drumming with her fingers on the edge of an empty flower-pot as if she were playing a very rapid fantasia on the piano. This seemed to me a further symptom of nerve storm. I encouraged her to speak, as tactfully as I could.

"Has Miss Battersby," I asked, "rebelled against her destiny?"

Lalage's face suddenly puckered up in a very curious way. I should have supposed that she was on the verge of tears if there existed any record of her ever having shed tears. But no one, not even her most intimate friends, ever heard of her crying; so I came to the conclusion that she wanted to laugh. I felt uneasy, for Lalage usually laughs without any preliminary puckerings of her face.

"Perhaps," I said, "you're thinking of the Archdeacon?"

"I am," said Lalage.

She spoke with a kind of gulp which, in the case of Hilda, would certainly have been a premonitory symptom of tears.

"Did he make himself particularly disagreeable?"

Greatly to my relief Lalage laughed. It was an excited, unnatural laugh; and it was not very far from crying. Still, it was a laugh.

"No," she said. "He made himself particularly agreeable, too agreeable; at least, he tried to."

Then she laughed again, and this time the laughing did her good. She became calmer and sat down on the edge of an iron water-tank which stood in the corner of the greenhouse. I warned her of the danger of falling in backwards. I also offered her one of my cushions to put on the edge of the tank, which looked to me hard. She laughed in reply. My cigarette-case was, very fortunately, in my pocket. I fished it out and asked her if she would like to smoke. She took a cigarette and lit it. I could see that it helped to calm her still further.

"Go on with your story," I said.

"Where was I?"

She spoke quite naturally. The laughter and the cigarette between them had saved her from the attack which for some time was threatening.

"You hadn't actually begun," I said. "You had only mentioned that the Archdeacon was, or tried to be, unusually, even excessively, agreeable."

"He was writing letters in his study," said Lalage, "when I knocked at the door and walked in on him. I apologised at once for interrupting him."

"You were quite right to do that."

"He said he didn't mind a bit, in fact, liked it. Then he looked like a sheep. You know the sort of way a sheep looks."

"Woolly?"

"Yes, frightfully, and worse. If I'd had a single grain of sense I should have bolted at once. Anybody might have known what was coming."

"I shouldn't. In fact, even now that I know something came, I can't guess what it was."

"Instead of bolting I brought out that text of Selby-Harrison's. He took it like a lamb."

"Woolly again, only a softer kind of wool."

"No," said Lalage, "just meekly; though, of course, he went on being woolly."

"There are several authorised interpretations of that text. My mother told me so this afternoon. I suppose the Archdeacon trotted them all out one by one?"

"No. I told you he took it like a lamb. Why won't you try to understand?"

"Anyhow," I said, "his demeanour was most encouraging to you. I suppose you suggested Miss Battersby to him at once?"

"No. I didn't. I couldn't."

Lalage hesitated again. She was not speaking with her usual fluency. I tried to help her out.

"Something in the glare of his eyes stopped you," I said. "I have always heard that the human eye possesses remarkable power."

"There was something in his eye," said Lalage, "but not that."

"It stopped you, though, whatever it was."

"No. It didn't. I wish it had. I might have cleared out at once if it had."

"If it wasn't a glare, what was it? I can't imagine a better opportunity for mentioning Miss Battersby."

"He didn't give me time."

"Do you mean to say he pushed you out of the room?"

"No."

"Did he swear? I once heard of an Archdeacon swearing under great provocation."

"No."

"I can't guess any more, Lalage. I really can't. You'll have to tell me what it was."

"He said he'd get married with pleasure."

"But not to Miss Battersby. I'm beginning to see now. Who is the fortunate lady?"

"Me," said Lalage.

"Good heavens, Lalage! You don't mean to say you're going to marry the Archdeacon?"

"You're as bad as he was," said Lalage, angrily. "I won't have such horrid things said to me. I don't see why I should be insulted by everyone I meet. I wish I hadn't told you. I ought not to have told you. I ought to have gone on looking for your mother until I found her."

I was immensely, unreasonably relieved. The idea of Lalage marrying the Archdeacon had been a severe shock to me.

"The Archdeacon's proposal—" I said. "By the way, you couldn't possibly have been mistaken about it, could you? He really did?"

Lalage blushed, hotly.

"He did," she said, "really."

"That just shows," I said, "what a tremendous impression you made on him with Selby-Harrison's text."

"It wasn't the text at all. He said it had been the dearest wish of his heart for years. Can you imagine anything more silly?"

"I see now," I said, "why he always took such an interest in everything you did and went out of his way to try to keep you from getting into mischief. I think better of the Archdeacon than I ever did before."

"He's a horrid old beast."

"You can't altogether blame him, though."

"I can."

"You oughtn't to, for you don't know—"

"I do know."

"No. You don't. Not what I mean."

"What do you mean? I don't believe you mean anything."

"You don't know the temptation."

Lalage stared at me.

"I've often felt it myself," I said.

Lalage still stared. She was usually quick-witted, but on this occasion she seemed to me to be positively dull. I suppose that the nerve storm through which she had passed had temporarily paralysed the grey matter of her brain. I made an effort to explain myself.

"You must surely realise," I said, "that the Archdeacon isn't the only man in the world who would like— Any man would. In fact, every man must, unless he's married already, and in that case he's extremely sorry he can't. I certainly do."

Lalage grew gradually more and more crimson in the face while I spoke. At my last words she started violently, and for an instant I thought she was going to fall into the tank.

"Do be careful," I said. "I don't want to have to dive in after you and drag you in a state of suspended animation to the shore."

Lalage recovered both her balance and her self-possession.

"Don't you?" she said, with a peculiar smile.

"No. I don't."

"I should have thought," she said, "that any man would. According to you every man must, unless he's married already, and then he'd be extremely sorry that he couldn't."

"In that sense of the words," I said, "of course I do. Please fall in."

"I daresay that the words don't really mean what they seem to mean," said Lalage. "Lots of those words don't. I must look them out in the original Greek."

After this our conversation became greatly confused. It had been slightly confused before. The reference to the original Greek completed the process. It seems to me, looking back on it now, that we sat there, Lalage on the edge of the water-tank, I in my hammock-chair, and flung illusive phrases and half-finished sentences at each other, getting hot by turns, and sometimes both together. At last Lalage left me, quite as abruptly as she had come. I did not know what to make of the situation. There had been nothing but conversation between us. I always understood that under certain circumstances there is more than conversation, sometimes a great deal more. I picked up "Sword Play," which lay on the ground beside me. It was the only authority to hand at the moment. I turned to the last chapter and found that the fencing professor and the haughty lady had not stopped short at conversation. When the lady finally unbent she did so in a very thorough way, and things had passed between her and the gentleman which it made me hotter than ever to read about. I had not stirred from my chair, nor Lalage from the edge of the tank while we talked. I was greatly perplexed. It was quite plain—the history of the swordsman and his lady was not the only one which made me sure of this—that my love-making had not run the normal course. In every single record of such doings which I had ever read a stage had

been reached at which the feelings of the performers had been expressed in action rather than in words. Lalage and I had not got beyond words, therefore I doubted whether I had really been love-making. I had certainly got no definite statement from Lalage. She had not murmured anything in low, sweet tones, nor had she allowed her head to droop forward upon my breast in a manner eloquent of complete surrender. I was far from blaming her for this omission. My hammock-chair was adjusted at such an angle that unless she had actually stood on her head I do not see how she could have laid it against my breast, and if she had done that her attitude would have been far from eloquent, besides being most uncomfortable for me. Still, the fact remained that I had not got by word or attitude any clear indication from Lalage that my love-making, supposing that I had been love-making, was agreeable to her.

Nor could I flatter myself that Lalage was any better off than I was. I had fully intended to make myself quite clear. The Archdeacon's example had nerved me. I distinctly remembered the sensation of determining that this one crisis at least should be brought to a definite issue; but I was not at all sure that I had succeeded. The gentleman of title whose exploits filled the three hundred pages of "Sword Play" said, "I love you, and have always loved you more than life"; and though he spoke in a voice which was hoarse with passion, his meaning must have been perfectly plain. I had not said, nor could I imagine that I ever should say, anything half so heroic. Had I said anything at all, or was Lalage as perplexed as I was? This question troubled me unnecessarily, for, as it turned out afterwards, Lalage was not at all perplexed.

(To be continued.)

THE PEREGRINE AT THE EYRIE.

AS towards the end of May we sailed in the cutter in quest of the peregrine falcon, it was to a great wedge-shaped lump of granite towering above the other islets that the professor pointed as the cradle of our hopes. Since April 7th, when he visited the eyrie and found three eggs lying on the bare ground, he had avoided any actual landing in case the birds' outcries might lead to their discovery by egg-collectors. He described the eyrie as being near the top of a sheer precipice a hundred feet high, inaccessible from in front, but, like some other strongholds, easily got at from behind. On successive tacks we made out one of the old birds perched right on the very top of the island, and later on we saw the other on a rock lower down, which the professor said was by the eyrie.

As we cast anchor, some greater black-backed gulls flew up and joined their hoarse barks to the incessant "aitch, aitch, aitch" of the indignant peregrines circling round their stronghold. Our approach in the dinghy was watched from the rocks above by increasing numbers of shags, and our actual landing proved the signal for a general exodus of the shag and puffin population of the island. On reaching the eyrie, which at first sight was empty, we were delighted to find not three, but four downy youngsters hiding under the surrounding overhanging

rocks. They were still in white down, with just a little patch of wing feathers beginning to show. While coaxing them into the open to be photographed, it was evident that they varied considerably in size but not in temper. All, when frightened by our interference, were quick to hiss and snap at us, and then, turning on their backs, they stuck out their lemon-coloured legs and clawed at us with their already formidable talons. These demonstrations failing, each would set up a loud yelping cry, immediately answered by redoubled cries from their angry parents circling above us, the tiercel's cry being shriller than that of his bigger and better half. There were several puffins' legs lying in the eyrie and a puffin's head on a rock.

Our object being to try to get photographs illustrating the home-life of the birds, our next step after photographing the young in down was to determine where and how the hiding-tent was to be erected. As the photographs we obtained were hardly commensurate with the time and trouble taken, I shall not go into details; but as the use of the hiding-tent enabled us to watch what goes on at the eyrie, I will ask the reader to join me for a watch of twenty-four hours in the tent. The hiding-tent, a canvas erection seven feet by four feet, painted outside to resemble the surrounding rocks, is standing on a platform of planks bridging some knife-edged rocks, and is securely lashed



Dr. Heatherley.

THE TIERCEL BRINGING A PUFFIN.

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to prevent it being blown over the edge of the precipice during the night. Of course, the success of this subterfuge of the hiding tent consists in the birds not noticing that although three men just now were climbing perilously near the young, only two go down again and sail away in the cutter.

As the peregrines' indignant clamour dies out within ten minutes of my friends leaving me at 5.30 p.m., there is little doubt on this point. Inside the tent it is nearly dark; alongside the camera is a peep-hole a foot wide and four inches deep, across which four thicknesses of fishing-net are pinned to ensure my being an invisible spectator. In front of me the rock slopes down like a hemisphere, and ten yards away is a jumble of rocks, among which is a nook with a flat space of earth about a yard wide, the eyrie, with wedge-shaped rocks projecting into it on both sides, behind which the young are dozing. Some feathers scattered about the eyrie with a few flies buzzing round are the only indications of the peregrines' presence. The aforetime favourite of kings resembles aviators of more recent date in providing long waits, occupied in this instance in smoking while watching a pair of rock-pipits running about exploring cracks and under-sides of ledges for flies. Occasionally I hear oyster-catchers fly piping past, and frequently deep guttural sighs that come from the puffins breeding in recesses among the rocks. To seaward there is a hole in the canvas which gives me a view of the sea far below, with a flock of puffins afloat, and halfway up the precipice stands a snaky shag preening herself. She is responsible for the reedy grunting I hear presently as she climbs up to her nest, which must be close beneath me. Some time after 6 p.m. I hear angry cries of greater blackbacks and, looking out, have a brief glimpse of two of these great gulls pursuing a peregrine, which easily avoids their vicious stoops, but shows no fight. About 7 p.m. the eyrie wakes to life and the young begin to move about. They vary a good deal in size. First one and then another lurches unsteadily across the eyrie.



C. J. King. "BENJAMIN, THE YOUNGEST OF THE BROOD."

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They look, with their great claws, like hunch-backed farmyard fowls. In the interval of a week a great deal of the down has come off their bodies, giving them a speckled appearance. Their white downy thighs look as if they wore short cotton

drawers, and with their great solemn eyes and formidable noses each is a caricature of Gladstone. Their home is a slaughter-house, where every meal entails a bird tragedy; there is a grim humour in their appearance. They are



Dr. Heatherley.

"INDIGNANT CLAMOUR."

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evidently getting hungry, and presently the eldest roots out a bloody skull from somewhere behind the rocks and, holding it under his talons, tears at it with his beak for some time and then tries to swallow it. Finding it too large, he puts it down again and tries to reduce it to comfortable dimensions. He perseveres a long time, but turning away for a moment I miss the end, as when I look again he is gone. Then ensues another long wait, the eyrie is deserted, even by the flies; twilight comes, and gradually the rocks lose their shadows and solid appearance, becoming a ghostly grey, and the whole scene looks unreal. Just as I am despairing of anything further taking place, about 9 p.m. I hear a great flapping of wings and,

looking out, find all the young in the eyrie gazing eagerly seawards, whimpering and flapping their wings. This whimpering sounds like the word "cheers" repeated rapidly in a plaintive tone. Then suddenly the whimpering grows louder, the wing-flapping more frantic, and for a moment I catch sight of the mother bird, the falcon, standing on the rock beside the eyrie holding a gory something in her beak with two little red legs dangling from it, the headless trunk of a puffin. The next moment she is lost among the flapping wings, wings mottled, as it were, with blobs of cotton-wool. As the flapping subsides I catch sight of her again in the gloaming. She stands facing me with her young around her and they are all bowing their heads up and down. As she stands there, darker and taller than her four young, her black cap makes her look like a cowed monk engaged with his acolytes in some mysterious rite, all the while a subdued chorus of whimpers. Eagerly pressing on her, they gradually drive her backwards until all are lost to sight under the rocks, but still the whimpering continues. In a few minutes the young crowd into view again, and I perceive the falcon again standing on the rock.

She has her back turned to the eyrie, is staring haughtily in my direction, and pays no attention to the whimpering crowd behind her. Then she is gone, the whimpering dies out, the young go one by one, the gloom deepens into night, and as I

get into my oilskins stealthily, for I know that the old birds usually roost on the rocks close above, and try noiselessly among a muddle of bags and camera cases to make a comfortable bed out of a spare foresail that seems to the touch to consist mainly of metal rings and rope-ends, I wonder what a certain charming Peter Pan would think of the reality of a little house among the birds.

When I awake in the chill dawn to the distant thunder of the surf, I find the eyrie grey and silent and turn to the comfort of hot tea from a Thermos, from which I am disturbed at 3.45 a.m. by loud whimpering, and looking out, am just in time to see the falcon dragging with some effort the white body of a razor-bill up into the eyrie. As a razor-bill is about her own size, it shows how powerful she must be. This time all disappear under the rocks, and I see nothing of the feeding. After about seven minutes she appears again, looks sternly in my direction, raises her wings, hops on to the rocks and, as she stands there for some minutes haughtily ignoring her clamouring young, a gory white feather sticking to her beak, quivers disregarded in the cold morning breeze. At 5 a.m. the tiercel comes with a headless puffin; he is easily distinguished from his more massive mate by his staring eyes, each being set in the centre of a yellow diamond-shaped space. He looks as if wearing a flat black Henry VIII. cap with a corner hanging down each



Dr. Heatherley.

THE FOUR YOUNG BIRDS.

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side of his face; his bearing is aristocratic, but the staring eye looks uncanny. He pitches at the far end of the long rock, transfers the puffin from his beak to his left talon, and marches rapidly down to his clamouring young, looking as fierce as a feathered tiger. From this time onward the young were fed about once an hour; sometimes a nestling shag was brought, but as a rule it was a puffin. Generally the feeding was done out of sight behind the rocks, but once during the morn-

ing when the tiercel brought a young shag and disappeared with his youngsters behind the rocks he came out again almost immediately into the open with Benjamin, the youngest of the brood, who stood opposite to him. The tiercel held the young shag under his talons and, tearing a small piece off with his beak, bent forward and tilted his head sideways in order to insert his beak into Benjamin's. While feeding his son he occasionally yapped at him if he did not take the proffered morsel directly. Until about 2 p.m. the eyrie was crowded with incident, all sorts of interesting things happened, and then, when the drizzling rain gave way to brilliant sunshine, which would enable me to take photographs, I found that the performance was over for the day. The young retired for their siesta and the sun shone gloriously hour after hour on the deserted eyrie, so that when towards evening the warning cries of the old birds circling overhead told me that my friends were on their way up to release



C. J. King.

A FAMILY GROUP.

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me. I was not so sorry that my watch was up. I had, however, the consolation of knowing that if the photographs were poor, I had, at any rate, watched what no one had recorded before—the home life of the peregrine at the eyrie.

Later on during our visit, when the young falcons were fully fledged and beginning to wander from the eyrie, so that photography from the tent was impracticable, we decided as a parting effort to try to get the youngsters in a group. By proceeding with great gentleness and slowness they were at last assembled. Although evidently uneasy and doubtful as to

would probably never thrive and afford much sport in those parts of the country where our own partridge has its home.

AFRICAN PARTRIDGES.

The Barbary partridge (*Caccabis petrosa*) is a very handsome species and affords fair shooting in Morocco, Sardinia and the Canary Islands, but it is probably too nearly allied to the "red-leg" to be acceptable to English sportsmen. There are, however, two or three species of South African partridges, or more properly francolins, which it has always seemed to me might be introduced with success into many parts of our country. They are all hardy birds that can withstand alike great heat, torrential rains and severe frost, which last in the high plateau lands of the interior often registers as much as 10 deg.

during winter. The francolins, it may be said, are true game-birds, not distantly remote from our own partridge. Huxley considered the genera *Caccabis*, *Francolinus* and *Coturnix* as Galline, that is Phasianine, while Dr. Gadow refers them to the Tetraoninae. Mr. Ogilvie-Grant is inclined to agree with Huxley's placing. Be this as it may, no British sportsman who has once shot the four South African francolins of which I am about to make mention, and who has heard their sharp and game-like call, can hesitate to class them as partridges, and as extremely satisfactory sporting birds to boot.

THE ORANGE RIVER FRANCOLIN.

First in sporting rank among the partridges of South Africa I should place the Orange River francolin (*Francolinus gariensis*), an extremely handsome game-bird, found in the grassy regions beyond the Orange River, and often extremely abundant in Bechuanaland, the Transvaal, Orange Free State, Namaqualand and Damaraland. This is a large francolin, measuring from thirteen inches to fourteen inches in length, and of extremely handsome plumage, the prevailing coloration being reddish brown about the head and upper parts, the breast and lower portions being reddish orange. There are dark bands mottled with white on the neck, and the chin and upper portion of the throat are white. These fine game-birds are found on grassy slopes, low, stony kopjes, and in the light bush and shrubbery fringing the banks of river courses. They lie extremely well to dogs, have a strong flight and afford excellent shooting. They are closely allied to the redwing francolin of Cape Colony and are usually called "redwings" by up-country colonists. The flesh, although drier than that of our English partridge, is quite good eating. Probably if these game-birds were acclimatised in England and accustomed to our moister and more succulent fare, their flesh would in time almost equal in value that of our native-born bird. In Bechuanaland, on the banks of the Maritsani, Setlagoli and other rivers, I have had first-rate sport with these splendid francolins. In a short day's shooting over a brace of pointers, two or three guns generally accounted for from ten to twelve brace, in addition to guinea-fowl, koorhaan (lesser bustards),

dikkop (stone-curlew), occasional small buck and hares. The call of the Orange River francolin, a sharper and shriller rendering of the cry of our English partridge, is one of the most familiar of up-country sounds at evening and early morning, and no sportsman who has once heard it can ever forget it. I ought to add that this francolin is found in good-sized coveys, usually numbering from six to eight birds, though as many as twelve or fourteen are sometimes seen.

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THE CAPE REDWING.

The true redwing of Cape Colony, sometimes known as *Le Vaillant's* francolin (*Francolinus Le Vaillanti*), after the French naturalist who named it, is slightly less in size than its near cousin, the Orange River francolin, and somewhat darker in coloration. In the Western Province of Cape Colony it is usually found in quiet valleys through which flows a mountain stream. In the thick covert of palmiet and other herbage afforded by these valleys the redwing lies very close, and has sometimes even to be pushed up with the foot. In the Eastern districts of the Colony redwings are found on the lower slopes of hillsides, where they afford good sport. Like its up-country cousin, this francolin is an extremely handsome species, and both birds certainly surpass in beauty our own comely English partridge. The flesh is quite good eating, although, as in the case of all African game-birds, save, perhaps, the great paauw or Kori bustard, somewhat drier than we are accustomed to in the moist climate of North Europe.

THE GREYWING FRANCOLIN.

This excellent sporting bird (*Francolinus afer*) is slightly inferior in size to the Cape redwing, measuring about a foot in length. The general colour is a light ashy grey, marked upon the back with black blotches and reddish brown bars. The chest and flanks are blurred with darker reddish brown markings,



C. J. King.

LOOKING SEAWARD.

what fate might have in store for them, it seemed as if they considered it would be bad form to show any sign of fear; and as I looked at my group of young nobles I wished that the egg-collectors of the three kingdoms had been there to try to realise the proper destiny of the eggs they covet so much.

FRANCIS HEATHERLEY.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

FOREIGN PARTRIDGES.

FOR some time past doubts seem to have been arising in the minds of shooting-men as to whether Hungarian partridges are or are not a success. Upon the whole, the consensus of opinion seems to be that, without the large importation of Hungarians during the last twenty years, our native stock of birds could not have stood the great strain imposed by the immense increase of shooting in the last generation. One wonders sometimes why shooting-men do not look yet further abroad for some means of adding to the supply of sporting birds in these islands. The French or red-legged partridge is now well acclimatised with us; but except for driving, it can scarcely be claimed as a success by the average gunner. The Greek partridge (*Caccabis saxatilis*), an ally of the Frenchman, which is found in hilly districts of the Alps, Apennines, Carpathians, Balkans and Sicily, might be successfully introduced into the more mountainous parts of Britain, but

and the stomach thinly barred with dark brown. There are rufous bands upon the head and neck and from the bill to the chest. The chin and throat are white. This is a first-rate sporting bird, found chiefly in hilly country in many parts of Cape Colony. It nests among bushes, and the covey usually numbers from six to eight young birds, in addition to the parents. The greywing lies very well to dogs, but is flushed more readily than the rather "sticky" Cape redwing. It is a very hardy species, and would, I am convinced, do well in the more hilly parts of Britain. I should add that all three of the francolins which I have described are invariably known to colonists as "partridges." They do not roost in trees, as do some of the other francolins, which are for this reason always referred to as "pheasants" by the Dutch and English colonists.

THE COQUI FRANCOLIN.

I cannot refrain from referring briefly to one other South African "partridge," which in my opinion would suitably bear transferring to British soil. This is the lovely little coqui francolin (*Francolinus sub-torquatus*), which is one of the most beautiful little game-birds in the world. N'swimpi is the native Matabele name for this bird, and Rhodesian colonists often call it the N'swimpi partridge. This francolin is found usually in grassy plains and near the banks of river courses from the northern part of British Bechuanaland towards the Zambesi. The colouring of this species is exquisite. The rich chestnut of the head, the brilliant orange of the neck, eyebrows and ear coverts, the dark hawk-like cross-bar markings of the breast and stomach, on a creamy ground, extending even to the leg feathering, and the chain-like markings, which in the females form a lunate collar upon the throat, all serve to distinguish this lovely little game-bird from all its allies. The back is dark brown, with transverse markings in white and chocolate, growing paler towards the tail. The legs are deep yellow in hue, and for the size of the bird are armed with very formidable spurs. The average length of this exquisite francolin is ten inches or a shade less. These game birds are found usually in grassy country and lie very close; in fact, in the high grass of the plains which they frequent it is very difficult to come across them without the aid of a good pointer, which for South African work is easily the best and most suitable sporting dog. They get up in ones and twos, and afford very pretty shooting. The flesh is extremely good eating and, next to that of the guinea-fowl and paauw, ranks, in my estimation, highest of all South African game-birds.

Each and all of these four South African francolins which I have enumerated could, in my judgment, be acclimatised without much difficulty in this country. Of those more suitable for general sporting purposes I should select the Orange River and the greywing francolins. There would be no difficulty whatever in procuring eggs or young of either species, and if the time should unhappily arrive when the stock of the grey partridge of Britain becomes too scarce to supply the needs of the hosts of gunners now requiring sport, I believe that these South African francolins would be found extremely useful birds for importation.

H. A. BRYDEN.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE MOUNT ETNA GENISTA.

DURING the scorching hot days of July and August, when many flowering shrubs need a deal of coaxing to keep them alive, the graceful Mount Etna Genista (*G. aetnensis*) gives us showers of its golden blossoms. It is an ideal shrub for hot, sandy soil, where many other kinds will not thrive, but it also seems at home in other and widely diverse situations. Only a few days ago I noticed some wonderful bushes of it overhanging a placid pool in a Thames Valley garden, and a beautiful picture they made, the reflection of the slender stems and golden blossoms in the water adding not a little to the charm of the surroundings. Although in a young state the shoots are sparsely clothed with soft, silky foliage, they are, in older specimens, quite devoid of leaves. This, however, is not very noticeable, as the slender, delicate green shoots make excellent substitutes. In common with others of the genera, and also its near ally the *Cytisus* this Genista is not easily established, and for that reason young plants in pots should, if possible, be purchased. When full grown a good plant may be anything from twelve feet to eighteen feet in height, and I know of few shrubs that are more attractive at this season, and none that is better adapted for growing in hot, dry situations. In addition to the rich golden colour of the small, pea-shaped flowers, they emit a rather strong yet pleasant fragrance, a feature that should commend the plant to many.

THE RED VALERIAN AS A WALL PLANT.

Although not usually regarded as a plant suitable for growing in the crevices of a dry wall, the Red Valerian, as will be seen in the accompanying illustration, is well adapted for this purpose. For many years a great favourite in our best English gardens, this plant was until recently in danger of dying out, except in a few strictly rural cottage gardens, where the passing of time makes but little change. During the last decade, however, several varieties with brighter-coloured flowers have been raised, and it would appear as though the Red Valerian was about to regain some at least of its former popularity. In the Round Tower Gardens at Windsor Castle, on which Sir Dighton Probyn has lavished so much loving care, this Valerian has in several places established itself in the retaining walls, the plants forming imposing tufts of leaf and stem that in June are transformed into masses of the rose red flowers.

FREESIAS FOR CHRISTMAS.

Although the festive season is still a long way off, there is no time to lose if flowers of the fragrant Freesia are to be available then. It is strange that

the Freesia, which is a universal favourite, is so seldom grown in large quantities. The bulbs are cheap and the cultivation simple, while the flowers are much more highly prized than the earliest Daffodils and Hyacinths. There is no better time for potting Freesia bulbs than the present, and for early flowers only the largest and most solid should be selected. Pots five inches or six inches in diameter are the most useful, these taking respectively six and ten large-sized bulbs. Rather light, turfy loam, flaky leaf-soil and old, dried cow-manure, with a dash of coarse sand and old mortar added, form a suitable soil mixture. As with all plants, thorough drainage is necessary. The bulbs ought to be arranged equidistant round the sides of the pots, with one in the centre, and covered with not less than an inch of soil. A cold frame with a coal-ash bottom is the best place to stand the pots containing the bulbs, and watering must be done carefully until the long, green leaves appear. As the days get cold and short, the plants may be taken to a greenhouse where the temperature ranges from 45deg. to 50deg. Fahr. Hard forcing with a higher temperature is one of the most prolific sources of failure in the cultivation of the Freesia. Frequent fumigations with nicotine to keep down green fly are most essential, as this ubiquitous pest has a partiality for the tender leaves. Owing to their slender foliage and flower-stems, Freesias need supports of some kind, and I know of nothing better than twigs from an old Birch Broom, or Allwood's Patent Wire Support, an ingenious coil of wire that can be easily and quickly fixed to one central stake. Where flowers are required for cutting, a large number of bulbs may be grown in boxes, but these ought not to be less than three inches deep. The bulbs may be placed two inches apart. In addition to the ordinary Freesia refracta and its variety alba, there are the beautiful golden yellow hybrid known as F. Chapmanii and the purple and mauve Tubergen hybrids, all of which are worthy of a place in every conservatory in the country.

THE CROWN IMPERIAL.

Of those flowers which are usually associated with old-world cottage gardens, the Crown Imperial, as the large *Fritillaria imperialis* is often called, deservedly occupies a prominent position. The success achieved with this flower in such gardens is due in a large measure to the fact that the bulbs are allowed to remain undisturbed for a number of years. It deeply resents disturbance, and it is only from well-established examples that the full beauty of the blossoms is revealed. Much, however, may be done by early planting, and as most bulb-dealers can supply bulbs by early September, they should be planted at that time. The bulbs have a curious rugged outline, with a deep cavity in the centre on the top side. A very pungent and not altogether pleasant smell is also characteristic, but, happily, this is not transmitted to the flowers. Owing to their comparatively large size the bulbs ought to be planted not less than five inches deep, and in small colonies of five, seven or nine, allowing about one foot between the bulbs. Where the soil is very heavy and wet, it is advisable to surround them with some coarse sand, and under any circumstances it is advisable to plant them on their sides; if placed upright the cavity previously referred to becomes filled with water and is a frequent source of decay. This Fritillary can now be had in a number of orange, red and yellow shades.

H.

AN INTERESTING HARDY SHRUB.

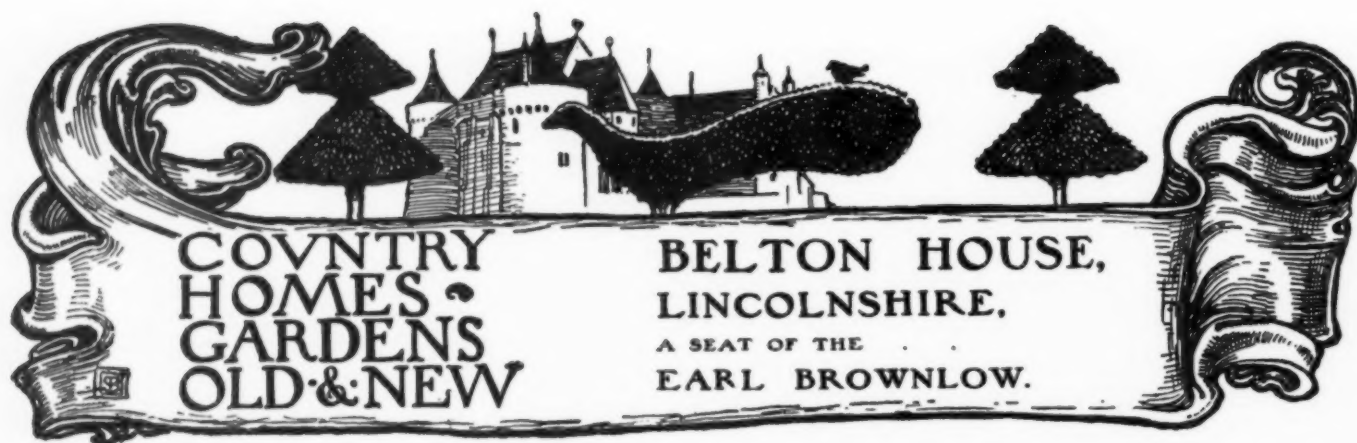
Though not new, *Moltkia petraea*, an Eastern European shrub, is comparatively unknown in gardens, though it possesses qualifications which should secure it general attention. It is included in the Borage family, which alone makes it of interest, for the Order Boraginaceae contains but few hardy plants with woody stems, the chief genera being *Ehretia*, *Lithospermum* and *Moltkia*. *Moltkia*



RED VALERIAN AS A WALL PLANT.

petraea is allied to *Lithospermum*, and has been known as *L. petraeum* and *L. rosmarinifolium*. It may, however, be easily separated from *L. prostratum*, for it is of stiff, upright habit and bears greyish, Lavender-like leaves. Its blue flowers are borne in terminal heads during summer, and they appear freely enough to make a good display. It is a plant eminently fitted for the rock garden, for it is stiff and sturdy, and will not readily exert any harmful influence on any choice subject in the vicinity. It is also useful for planting in a small bed on a lawn, or as a group in the front of a shrubbery. Cuttings of half-ripe shoots may be rooted in sandy soil in summer, and young plants may be put straight out of pots into permanent positions.

W. D.



BELTON HOUSE is what it was and what it was meant to be. That, coupled with its intrinsic excellence, gives it its quite special distinction and value. No more admirable style of English country house exists than that which was evolved in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. It was Sir Christopher Wren's most active and creative period, and though the immense extent of his ecclesiastical and civic creations gave him little time for country-house-building, yet his influence and even in many instances his direct intervention are clearly evident in this direction also. The tradition that he gave the plans for such houses as Belton and Stoke Edith is, no doubt, correct in principle, and we must certainly believe that he produced the general idea even if he did not work out the particular details. In his time, great men, whether they were landed proprietors, successful lawyers, or merchant princes, were busily engaged with bricks and mortar. Yet we have no considerable number of their houses complete originally and retaining their character. In many cases older houses were merely added to, or re-edified on, old foundations. Such are Petworth and Chatsworth. Of those that were built anew, too many, like Chippenham in Cambridgeshire, have entirely disappeared, or, like Lowther

Castle, have been altered beyond recognition. But the alterations of 1777 did not alter the plan or impair the general appearance of Belton, and it therefore remains one of the best examples that we have of the manner in which a wealthy commoner of large ideas and informed taste built, decorated and furnished his country home at the time when Dutch William was stepping into his English uncle and father-in-law's shoes.

Richard Brownlow, who was eighty-five when he died in 1638, was one of those men of prudence and conduct who have built up fortunes in the law without ever obtaining one of its great prizes. He was not a Lord Chancellor or a Chief Justice. He merely became Prothonotary of the Court of Common Pleas in 1591, and continued in that office until he died forty-seven years later. There was money to be made in it, and Richard Brownlow had the energy and capacity to develop its functions in every legitimate way. So we hear that it yielded him an income of £6,000, and that "he used to close the profits of the year with '*Laus Deo*,' and when they happened to be extraordinary with '*Maxima Laus Deo*.'" This son of "John Brownlow of High Holborn" continued to live in his father's house in that parish and much in his father's way, so that we are not surprised to find from his account book of 1617



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THE DINING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

that out of a total expenditure of £6,062 10s. 1d., less than a quarter had gone to maintain him and his large family, and that the whole of the rest had been invested in land. Thus he became possessed of various Lincolnshire manors, of which Belton was one, and his rent-roll had risen to over £5,000 a year when "his bodie was embaulmed wrapped in Leade and Buried

to their assessing him at £1,000 in 1643 for the expenses of the Army, and was not prevailed upon to pay until he had been summoned to appear at Haberdashers' Hall. Like his father, he was a prudent husbandman of his fortune, and after the Restoration he was set down as having £8,000 per annum in land and £20,000 "in purse." His wife bore him no children, and



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OVER THE WEST CHIMNEY-PIECE OF THE SALOON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

at Belton in the Countie of Lyncolne in a Vault made there by his appointment." Four-fifths of his fortune went to his elder son, John, and the rest to the younger, William, both of whom were made baronets in 1641. These honours cannot have been conferred upon them for their loyalty, for they took no part in the war on either side, and the sympathies of Sir John of Belton seem to have been with the Parliament. He demurred, however,

he was thus able to do much for his less wealthy brother and sisters and their descendants. His chief affection centred upon a great-nephew and great-niece. The former bore from 1668 the same name and title as himself, becoming Sir John Brownlow, third baronet of Humby, at the age of nine. The latter was Alice Sherard, a grandchild of old Richard Brownlow's daughter, Elizabeth. These two were born in the same year, and from



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LOCK IN THE SALOON.

"C.L."



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LOCK PLATES.

"C.L."

childhood lived much at Belton and in London with old Sir John, whose "earnest desire" "that a marriage should be effected between my kinsman Sir John Brownlowe and my kinswoman Alice Sherard" was realised in 1676, when the young folk were only sixteen years of age. Thus it was that "young" Sir John and his wife, Alice, became possessed in 1679 of great and well-ordered estates and a large sum of ready money, so that the old house at Belton—which probably had remained much as it was when the Prothonotary bought it—was deemed no longer commensurate to its owner's fortune and position, and it was determined that it should give way to one representing in size and style the last word of its day.

Preparations for this began in 1684. Not only was the old manor house at Belton pulled down, but also the neighbouring one of Rington, which had been the home of "young" Sir John's father. Much of their material, including the stone, was employed upon the new work. But this cannot have gone far, for the whole of the outer walls of the great new house and of its court of out-buildings are of ashlar, well wrought and finely laid, as was the fashion of that day. The material had not to come from far, for the Ancaster quarries, known and used ever since the time of the Romans, lie but four miles from Belton. By March, 1685, all was ready to make a beginning, and we then find the entry in the steward's

accounts: "Gave the Mason to drink att laying the first stone of the new house: 5s." These building accounts only deal with work done on the spot, and do not include fine decorative adjuncts, such as Belton's famous wood-carvings. There can be no doubt that these are the work of Grinling Gibbons, but there is no more documentary proof that it is so than that Wren was employed as architect. The absence of Grinling Gibbons' name in any of the surviving accounts of the private houses where carved woodwork in his manner is largely represented is curious. We have plenty of his

bills among the Royal accounts and those of St. Paul's, but none in respect to work done for private people, except one preserved in the archives of Arbury in Warwickshire for a very diminutive amount. There is, as we have long known, no mention of him in the Chatsworth accounts, where the carvings were certainly largely, if not entirely, done by Watson and Lobb. Now, a recent investigation of documents reveals the fact that his name is likewise absent at Petworth, where Selden—who in Horace Walpole calls his assistant, as he does Watson—was regularly paid for work done during a considerable period. Although a great deal of work at St. Paul's and in the palaces must have been left to pupils and assistants, it is Gibbons' name, as designer, chief and employer, that alone appears in the accounts, and we should have expected the same methods to have obtained if



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THE WEST DOOR OF THE SALOON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE OF THE CHAPEL GALLERY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

he was responsible for the carvings at Chatsworth and Petworth. At Belton, however, there is no record whatever of the origin of the splendid carvings that appear in so many of the rooms, and were so skilfully cleaned and strengthened by Mr. Rogers half a century ago, when he found that the worm had left little solid about them beyond an outer coat of the thickness of an eggshell.

In plan Belton House remains practically as its designer drew it. It is an H-shaped house, but no longer quite in the manner that had prevailed under Elizabeth and James. Then, one-half of the centre block had been customarily occupied by a hall windowed on both sides and entered at one end. Inigo Jones had superseded this by making the centre part two rooms thick, and placing a hall centrally entered in the middle of one elevation, and a saloon of corresponding size on the opposite elevation. This remained for long the recognised arrangement, and we find it at Belton. It is, however, so large a house that these great apartments do not occupy the whole



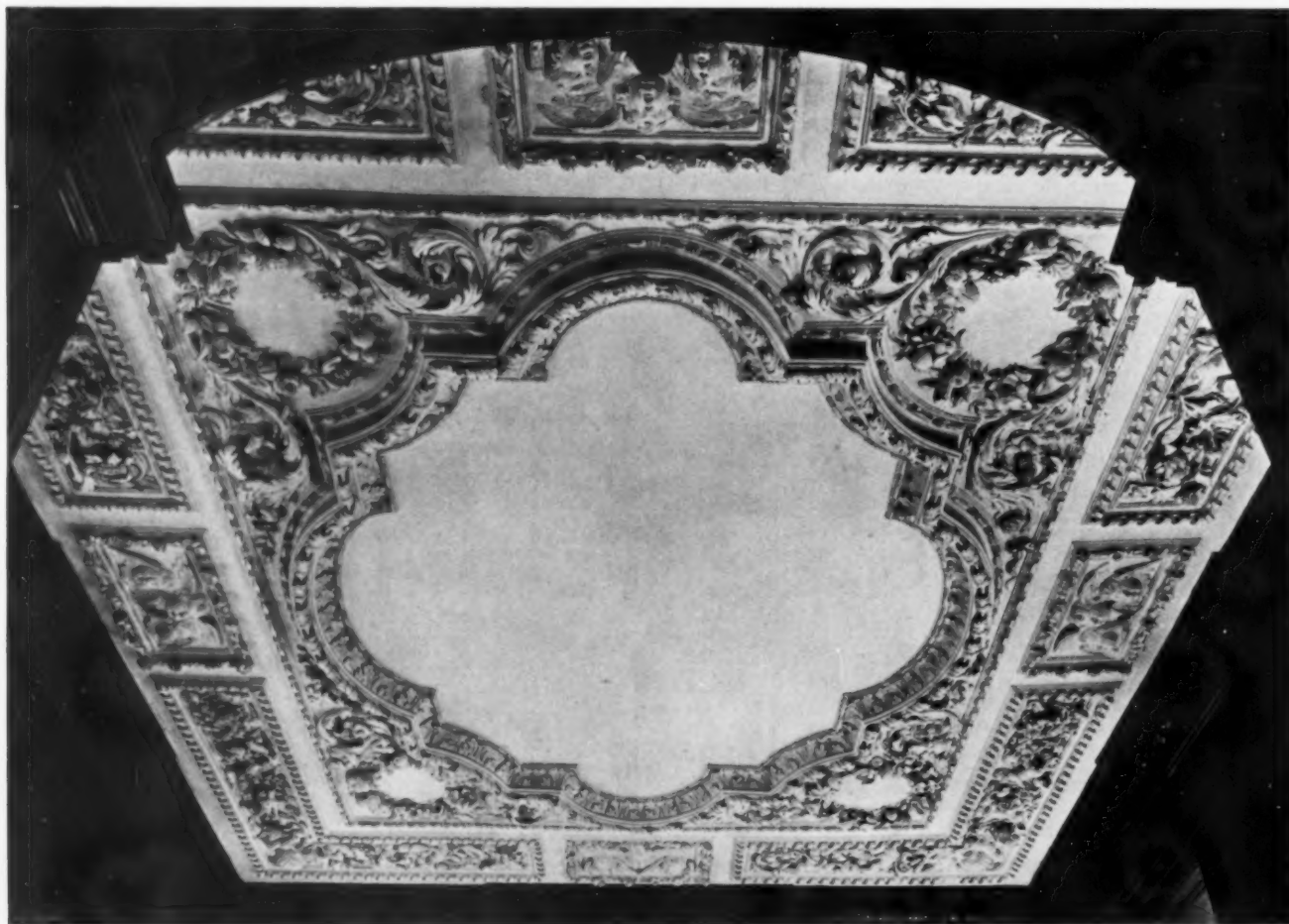
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centre block, but have rooms on either side of them before the wings are reached. The customary arrangement of a staircase in the middle of each wing was retained, but they were merely subsidiary, a grand stairway being placed in the space directly east of the entrance hall. A plan is given by Campbell in his "Vitruvius Britannicus," and is reproduced with the names now given to the principal rooms added. Corridors are almost entirely absent, and, excluding the three stairs but including the chapel, the ground

floor is divided into thirteen rooms. The first floor reproduces this arrangement, except that the space over the saloon is divided into a large and a small chamber, the latter being of great interest, as it is a most perfect specimen of the then favourite fashion of painting wood-wainscoted rooms to represent various marbles. There is a little room of the same sort in the south-west wing of Holme Lacy. One set of illustrations of the Belton interiors appeared in COUNTRY LIFE in October, 1903, and those now presented are additional and



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THE CHAPEL CEILING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

supplementary. The great entrance hall, which faces south, has two chimney-pieces opposite to its windows and on each side of the great door into the saloon. The one to the left has a portrait of "old" Sir John encircled with a Grinling Gibbons composition, where dead birds play the most prominent part, the wings in one or two cases projecting at least a foot from the wall. These birds are associated with festoons of fruit, flowers and ears of wheat. By way of distinction fishes and shells are mainly employed in the decoration that surrounds the portrait of this Sir John's wife over the other chimney-piece. But with the fishes are associated fine examples of the elaborate whorl scrolls that Rogers put down as Gibbons' most singular and



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FROM LIBRARY TO BOUDOIR.

"C.L."

characteristic achievement. In the saloon the chimneys are at either end, and are ornamented in even a richer manner. That at the east end, surrounding a portrait of "young" Sir John's fourth daughter, the Duchess of Ancaster, is composed of fruit and flower motifs, while at the west end dead birds are again prominent, as the illustration shows. The portrait is that of his unmarried daughter, Margaret. The illustration includes the upper part of the mantel-piece. It is noteworthy that in Wren's day, as we know from Hampton Court and Broughton, it was quite usual

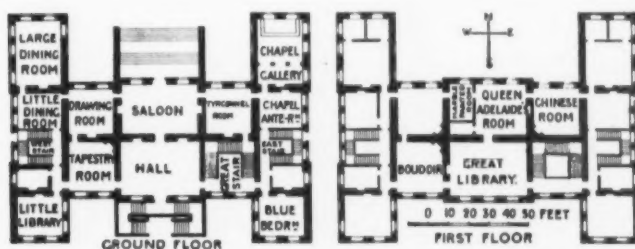


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THE BOUDOIR.

"C.L."

to have no mantel-shelf, wainscoted panels coming right down to the great roll moulding of marble that framed the open hearth.



PLANS.

At Belton, however, this was surmounted by a shelf, such as the illustration shows, and in the steward's account we find the item "5 Cornishes, with freezes to Chimney pieces £30. 0. 0."

It was probably above these "5 Cornishes" that "young" Sir John proposed to place the portraits of his five daughters, and, as tradition says, ordered of Grinling Gibbons five of his "frames" to surround them. It must be noted, however, that the house was completed before the youngest one was born, and that she was only six years old when her father died. He not only introduced the carving in the principal sitting-rooms, but also in the chapel.



Copyright.

THE NORTH FRONT AND SALOON DOORWAY.

"C.L."

This occupies the end of the north-east wing, and has its gallery level with the ground-floor rooms, the main part of it being level with the basement. The carvings on and about the altar and on the gallery screen are mostly of deal painted, the altar-piece being of the same material and representing white marble. Such carvings are not of the finest, and certainly not by Gibbons' own hand, but those in the gallery, occupied by the family, and still

furnished with late seventeenth century chairs covered in old crimson velvet, are of the highest quality, and reveal the master's touch. Long "drops" hang down the centre of the huge panels, while over the mantel-piece is a beautiful decoration of fruit and flower garlands starting from cornucopie and crossed palm branches. Recessed in the panel a marble sculpture has been inserted, with the inscription "the work of Viscount Alford, 1848." The wainscoting of the gallery is of cedar, the carvings being in Grinling Gibbons' usual medium of limewood, built up in layers about two inches and a-half thick, glued together.

The rain-water-heads at Belton are dated 1686, showing that the work of building went apace, and all must have been ready for the reception of the family before November, 1688, when an inventory of the furniture was made. Much of this remains, though the description is hardly sufficiently exact to identify many pieces, and we see from the style that a very great deal was added during the forty years that followed. This, however, will be alluded to more in detail in separate articles. It is interesting to observe that, though Alice Sherard was not her father's heir, the Sherard arms appear in the cartouche in



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LORD TYRCONNEL'S SUNDIAL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the north pediment impaled by those of Brownlow. But the latter—namely, the "inescutcheon within an orle of martlets" granted by herald Segar to the Prothonotary, are found alone in the south pediment. Again, in the ceiling of the chapel gallery the same two arms appear, but separate, one at either end. The plaster ceilings at Belton are as fine as anything we possess of the age of Wren, and an illustration of that in the body of the chapel is given.

It has been a habit to attribute these to Grinling Gibbons, but there is no probability, let alone evidence, that he even designed ceilings, and still less that he had craftsmen to produce them. At St. Paul's and the City churches it was Henry Doogood that Wren employed as master-plasterer, and the Belton ceilings may have come from the same source.

Lady Elizabeth Cust, in her "Records of the Cust Family," tells us that "little is known of Sir John Brownlow's private life," while, as to his public life, beyond his serving as Member for Grantham and entertaining King William at Belton in 1695, there is not much to be said. His epitaph, therefore, speaks rather in the manner of such compositions when it declares that "he was the great ornament of his Country in his Publick capacity," but it certainly gives him no more than his due when it praises him for "his noble House w^{ch} he Built from y^e ground." Fortune had ever smiled upon him except in the one matter of his only son dying when two months old. His five daughters thus became considerable heiresses, although by the will of "old" Sir John, Belton and two other manors were to pass, in the event of the demise of "young" Sir John and



Copyright.

THE SOUTH FRONT AND HALL DOORWAY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Alice Sherard without male heir, to Sir John's brother, William. He became baronet on his brother's death in 1697, but never entered into possession of Belton, for Dame Alice outlived him, and ruled as mistress of Belton until 1721. Lady Elizabeth Cust says of her: "When her daughters grew up they created some sensation in London owing to their good looks and large fortunes, and had many aspirants for their hands."



Copyright. GATE TO THE WEST COURT. "C.L."

Lady Brownlow, who was a woman of great force and decision of character, ruled over their love affairs with an iron hand, and her daughters were mortally afraid of her. Various stories were formerly current in the family as to the terror with which their mother inspired these poor girls. One of the most amusing of these is, that once, when the five sisters were enjoying a surreptitious tea party in one of their rooms, the dreaded footsteps were heard approaching, and to save detection the whole tea equipage was promptly thrown out of the window." Her daughter Margaret died young, but for the others she provided titled husbands, and they became respectively a duchess, a countess, a viscountess and a baroness. Of these it is the viscountess that concerns the historian of Belton, for she married the heir to that estate—a John Brownlow, who succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his father, Sir William, in 1702, but did not obtain Belton until his aunt died twenty years later. He had nothing of the thrift of the Prothonotary, but loved expensive display and a pompous manner of life. This consorted ill with a small paternal inheritance, and even the twelve hundred a year that Eleanor Brownlow brought him in marriage in 1712 did not save him from financial embarrassment. Belton, however, was always open to the young couple as a country house, for Dame Alice, far from showing any jealousy of her son-in-law and successor, encouraged him to reside there and help her in the administration of the estate. He knew it well, therefore, before he became its owner, and no doubt had ready the plans that he had formed for its improvement. Much that he did has disappeared, for it consisted of considerable developments of the formal gardens that the landscape school afterwards destroyed. "Young" Sir John had, no doubt, begun this lay-out, and we find mention in his accounts of payments for 10,000 trees, besides 2,000 roses and 100 gooseberry bushes. But it is certain that the new owner, who had been created Viscount Tyrconnel in the Peerage of Ireland three years before

he succeeded to Belton, greatly extended its scope. We know that when the house was first built, the forecourt was modest in dimension, and was enclosed by very simple ironwork. This appears in a picture of the south front that hangs on the west staircase. Tradition attributes this painting to "young" Sir John's butler, and among the figures rises conspicuously the giant porter, Henry Bug, holding in his hand the huge silver-mounted staff that is still preserved in the house. But ere Kyp's view of Belton was published, this was changed. There the forecourt stretches far out, and is enclosed by one of the fashionable *clairvoyées*. It is entered through splendid wrought-iron gates hung on stone piers, and is decorated with statues and other objects. Among them is the sundial with the statue of Time, now illustrated, but which was afterwards removed to the north side of the house.

Then, also, the gates and their piers were erected in their present position at the entrance from the Grantham road to the great avenue that stretches up to the house. Lord Tyrconnel quartered other arms with those of Brownlow and adopted lion supporters in place of his ancestors' greyhounds. It is these quartered arms that appear on the overthrow of his gates, while the lions surmount his gate-piers. On the other hand, the smaller gates that now open from the west court to the park have, as the illustration shows, the martlets on the overthrow and the greyhounds at the apex of the iron piers. The same greyhound standing on a cap of maintenance as granted to the Prothonotary for his crest is engraved on the splendid brass furniture that adorns all the chief doors of the house. Much attention was paid at that time to the locksmith's art, and beautifully-engraved plates, both for rim and mortice locks, were favoured by many other people besides Sir John Brownlow. William III. himself seems to have taken an interest in such, for not only are they to be found at Hampton Court, but he presented some to the Earl of Dorset for Knole and to his cousin



Copyright. SIDE GATE OF THE DEER-PARK. "C.L."

of Nassau Zulestein for his Guelderland "Kasteel." It was the moment of finished craftsmanship in England. All the details of such houses as Belton were then put in the hands of men who had reached the perfection of technique. The admirable designs of Wren and his brother architects suffered nothing, nay, were greatly enhanced by the admirable execution of the most subsidiary parts.

Inside the house, Lord Tyrconnel did little more than complete and supplement the work of his uncle. The illustration that shows one of the doorways of the saloon with the latter's greyhound on the lock also shows the Tyrconnel lion close by as a bell-pull. Next to the hall, towards the west, lies what is now called the tapestry-room. The remarkably fine set of hangings on its walls have Lord Tyrconnel's arms and coronet in the centre of their top border, proving that they were woven after 1718. They are said to have been made at the somewhat mysterious Stamford Tapestry Works, and that the contract for their making still exists. This factory was largely supported by the needs of Burghley House, close by, and it must be remembered that one of the Brownlow heiresses, an elder sister of Lady Tyrconnel, was Countess of Exeter. To the same source is attributed the coverings of the set of Queen Anne walnut chairs, of which one appears in the illustration of the doorway just mentioned. The scheme of each piece is a great bouquet of finely-drawn and well-coloured flowers rising out of a vase. The settee of the set is of more ambitious design and more delicate execution, for the floral groups are supplemented by panels of classic figures, and in the right-hand corner of the seat covering is woven the name Stranover Bradshaw, also known at Holkham. The brownish ground of these chair covers likewise appears in the tapestry carpets in which Belton is rich. The finest of them, with its great floral design, is, like the set of furniture, in the saloon. Others have been cut to fit bedrooms, for time was when tapestries were by no means prized at Belton, and the Tyrconnel set was discovered by the present Earl Brownlow carpeting the attics, and by him they were reclaimed and honourably placed in their present position in 1879. To him also is due the decoration of the large dining-room with magnificent pictures of bird-life by Hondelcoeter

and Weenix, gilt wood-carvings in the Grinling Gibbons style giving an appropriate finish to the whole conception. He found this room used as a library, but removed the books it contained to the great room over the hall. This had been transformed in 1777 by James Wyatt in his earlier and better classic manner. Both it and the boudoir next to it have mahogany doors, closely resembling those which Sir William Chambers introduced at Blenheim, and ceilings that derived their inspiration from Piranesi. The somewhat simple plaster-work of the boudoir ceiling was heightened by devices painted in green and chocolate. This was very usual at the time, but few of these ceilings retain their ancient colouring, and this gives additional value to the example at Belton. The alterations made at this time to the exterior of the house deserve less praise, but, luckily, did not go very far. They consisted chiefly of the removal of the cupola and of the pediments over the dormers. These have wisely been replaced by the present Earl Brownlow, who used the drawings in the "Vitruvius Britannicus" as models. It must also have been Wyatt who added in his manner pilasters and entablature to the hall doorway, but he left untouched the corresponding one from the saloon on to the north garden so delightfully re-created by Earl Brownlow.

Belton is a place where there is so much that is admirable and so much to interest us in the succeeding generations of its owners that the pen drives fast over the paper, the utmost limits of which have been reached without having recited the story of Lord Tyrconnel's sister and successor, Anne Lady Cust; of her son, Sir John Cust, Speaker of the House of Commons; of her grandson, the first Lord Brownlow; or of his descendants, of whom the present and third Earl has so carefully and judiciously given full value and renewed perfection to his enviable possession. T.

FURNITURE OF THE XVII. & XVIII CENTURIES.

FURNITURE AT BELTON HOUSE.—I.

IN describing Belton as a "Country Home" it was stated to have been built by "young" Sir John Brownlow, and completed for his occupation before November, 1688, when an inventory of its furniture was taken. From the latter we must conclude that he kept very little of the contents of the old house which he had pulled down. There is no trace of the oak chairs, tables, chests and court cupboards usual in the first half of the seventeenth century, and the furniture

which is mentioned is evidently of the lighter post-Restoration make. "Gold-gilt" armchairs, tables and "seeing-glasses" appear in the drawing-rooms, while other armchairs are described as of damask, velvet or cane, the material and character of their frames not being described. Though this makes identification difficult, no doubt much that is enumerated remains in the house, and that will certainly apply to the fine walnut-wood chair illustrated. It is elaborately carved and displays



A GILT CONSOLE TABLE.



ORIENTAL LACQUER CHEST ON GILT STAND

ENGLISH FURNITURE
Of the 17th and 18th Centuries

The Property of the
EARL BROWNLOW

1701

an unusually free use of amorini, which not only appear in their customary positions on the top rail and the front stretcher, but also on the legs, where they are lightly poised on the inward curve of the scroll, and on the uprights of the back, in the form of terminals. It belongs to one of two very similar sets that have, at no very remote period, suffered from "improvement." They do not fall into the early Restoration cane backed and seated

category, for the seats were always upholstered. There was, however, no upholstery in the back, which had four upright carved slats, all similar to the two that remain. The centre ones have been removed, and the whole of the woodwork gilt. This not only quite destroys the original character, but has a bad effect. The surface was never prepared for gilding or the carving smoothed and finished with the assistance of gesso or other composition as was the practice where gilding was intended. The result, therefore, is rather suggestive of a child having played with a bottle of gold paint, and it makes the carving look coarse instead of sharp and racy, as it does where the rich surface of well-rubbed walnut remains. Such, luckily, is the case with one of the chairs of the set other than that illustrated. It was given by John, first Earl Brownlow, to his agent, Mr. John Cragg, and is still the property of the latter's great-grandson, Captain Cragg of Threekingham House, which is not many miles from Belton. That retains its four slats and its original surface in excellent and well-kept condition, and shows what remarkably good chairs "young" Sir John Brownlow purchased for his new home. The day-bed illustrated may be the one described as "a Couch chaire with a Cushion" in "My Lady's Chamber," for though it is rather later in style than the chair, it is of the period of the inventory. The heavily-carved front stretcher has gone out of fashion, and is replaced by one composed of scrolls arranged in pairs, their heads, decorated with a rose flower, butting each other. The leg is of the same form, but the cross stretchers are still of the straight turned kind. The abandonment of these forms in favour of a straight leg, with large cap, and of horizontal curved stretchers, was taking place at the time that Sir John was furnishing, as is shown by the chairs in the same bedroom as the couch, being, like it, upholstered in pale blue damask. Of the same material, and showing the same corkscrew curves as the couch, is the great bed, of which the back and tester are illustrated. It is eighteen feet high, and is much like that of William III. at Hampton Court, except that it is of the



A DAY-BED IN THE BLUE ROOM.

then in England. It is clear, from the style and the quantity, that a great deal of furniture was added by Sir John after the inventory was made, and before his death in 1697.

That his widow, Dame Alice, continued in this course is made evident by two looking-glasses of that Venetian type that used glass elaborately shaped and etched for its frame, and which, in this case, have the lady's arms impaled by those of her husband enclosed in a lozenge. She continued to rule at Belton till 1721, and so probably added the great console table that uses the Brownlow greyhounds as its front legs. Belton is rich in gilt console tables that have this same heraldic emblem in some part of the ornament, and which must, therefore, belong to a date earlier than 1721. In that year Dame Alice's nephew and son-in-law, Viscount Tyrconnel, succeeded to Belton, and used different arms and supporters. Later furniture, such as

the set of gilt chairs in the saloon covered with Gobelins tapestries, were introduced by him, but it is difficult to say who brought to Belton the lacquer chest, of which a coloured plate is given, and which is raised on a stand in rococo style, having griffins sitting on rocks and with outstretched wings at its front corners, the back legs being of scroll shape, ending in griffins' heads. It is curious that one precisely similar, both as to the chest and the stand, is at Denton House, which lies a little to the south as Belton does to the north of Grantham. The builder of Belton had evidently been fond of lacquer, and many articles of it appear in his inventory, where six "Japann tables" and six "Japann stands," three "Japann boxes" and one "Japann stool" are mentioned, and such are still to be found in the house. They are of English lacquer, and it is noteworthy that the year of Sir John's inventory is likewise that of the publication of Stalker and Parker's "Treatise of Japanning," which speaks of the skill that had been attained by English japanners, and even of the popularity of the art with amateurs. But the chest now illustrated is Oriental. It is one of the large travelling chests—usually made in pairs, as in the present



A CHARLES II. ARMCHAIR.

instance—with handles which, when turned upwards, rise four inches above the lid, so that a pole resting on the bearer's shoulders at either end may pass through them. Though long, these chests are of small width, and thus can travel along narrow ways. Those at Belton and Denton are two feet one inch across at the widest point, five feet long, and two feet two inches high without their stands, which are, of course, English additions of early eighteenth century date. They may have been the property of a great Daimio, or have been bridal chests to hold the trousseau, and be borne from the bride's parents' home to that of her husband with some ceremony, as is still the custom in China, if not in Japan. To the latter country these chests must belong, judging from the character of the decoration. The ground is black lacquer, with raised ornament representing plants of chrysanthemum and of tree peony rising out of rocky ground. The earliest European writer on Oriental lacquer, Father d'Incarville, whose account dates from 1760, speaks of the superiority of Japanese lacquer being recognised even then by the Chinese themselves, although, like all other arts, the Japanese had centuries before received it from China.

The process of producing the finer examples is long and delicate. After due preparation



BED IN THE BLUE ROOM.

and smoothing of the substance of the article—sometimes papier-mâché, but more often wood of the pine tribe—numerous and differently-prepared coats of the resinous gum of the lacquer tree (*Rhus vernicifera*) are applied, being in some cases mixed with other ingredients, and having different technical names. More than once in the process the surface is rubbed down and polished. The groundwork being thus completed, those pieces that are in the hands of craftsmen of special artistic attainment are then ornamented.

If, as in the example under notice, the design is raised, putty, composed of black lacquer thickened with brickdust, lampblack and other substances, is laid on to the ground and modelled, and on to this, coats of transparent lacquer, coloured with pigments, are painted, and often dusted with gold powder. One of the most curious features of the lacquer tree sap is that it does not set in the sun or in dry, warm air, but has to be shut up in cold, damp closets. But when set it is so hard that it is not injured by boiling water, or even by acid or alcohol when cold. Herein it differs from the lacquer of eighteenth century European imitators, who never succeeded in obtaining the materials and employing the processes that specially distinguished the Oriental artist in this craft.

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

BEFORE me lies a substantial volume by Mr. Francis George Heath called *British Rural Life and Labour* (King and Son). It is a piece of sound and hard work, but treats of much that has been discussed so frequently as to become hackneyed and tiresome. There is, however, one little section which possesses a curious interest of its own. It is the one devoted to the future of the British peasant. After looking backward as far as 1872 to the "gentle revolt that enlisted the whole-hearted sympathy of the British public," the author goes on to wax eloquent about the future of the small holders now in process of creation. He would have the Irish policy adopted in England, and liberal assistance given towards the purchase of small holdings. It would have been more interesting to have this whole question discussed on a wider basis. The majority of thoughtful men who have studied this phase of the land problem know very well that the positions taken up respectively by the Liberal and Conservative politicians are radically unsound.

To work a small holding is better than to be a simple labourer, but it could never be a very profitable undertaking. The labourer's wage averages between fifteen and sixteen shillings a week throughout Great Britain, and, of course if he could gain from twenty to twenty-five shillings from the cultivation of a piece of land his position would be very much improved. It is only here and there, however, that a man can make such a large profit per acre as this would mean. The farmer on a large scale cultivating, say, five hundred acres would have an income of two hundred and fifty pounds per annum if he could make ten shillings on an acre; but if the tenant or owner—in cultivation it matters very little which he is—cannot make any more, his net income will only amount to twenty-five pounds. But supposing that by intensive culture, great skill, or some other means, he is able to double the productiveness of the soil and to make a pound per acre (which is certainly no easy matter in these times),

he still has earned an income of only fifty pounds per annum. No doubt for a short period he would feel himself extremely pleased and gratified to have so much coming in; but in the meantime education is increasing—not education of books only, but the education of life itself: the things he hears, and feels, and begins to know. In consequence his wants, simple at first, expand perceptibly. He wishes to travel, and even if that wish takes only a modest form it requires money. He finds that if he runs up to London or to the nearest town, not only must he spend the requisite money on his train fare, but that amusements and one thing and another will make further demands upon his pocket.

In consequence he feels that his income is absolutely inadequate to what he thinks are his necessities. This expansion on the small holding is difficult, if not absolutely impossible, because his method of cultivating the soil is uneconomic. The man who is in the best position for making the most out of tillage is he who can command a wide area of land and also possesses abundance of capital so that he can use the best and most effective machinery, plenty of manure and all the resources that go to increase the fertility of the soil. This is a plain truth which all those engaged in farming understand, but which politicians of all shades try to mask under rhetoric. It is so easy to paint the health and happiness of the little man who is content with his tiny cottage and his few acres, his diminutive head of livestock, his garden produce, and so on. Imagination revels in picturing him sitting in the porch drinking the mead that has been manufactured from his own honey.

But all that differs very much from the reality. What happens is that even if the man himself were content to stick to his hoe and his spade, and to confine his interests to his eggs and bacon, his sons and daughters will not permit him to do so. School and companionship have opened their eyes also. They want to obtain a much larger share of the good things of the world than ever he did, and the little glebe will not yield

them. On the other hand, the large farmer has all the scope of the wholesale manufacturer: plenty of land to work and to get good returns, if he has the skill and energy to make them. There are many farmers in England just now whose position is little, if any, inferior to that of the squire or landowner himself. They have as good motors, they ride as good horses to hounds, they live a life that may be a little more strenuous, but in that way is better than the life of the absolutely idle. Not that we mean to say that the landowner is by any means an idle man as a rule. On the contrary, he is one of the busiest; but it does not devolve upon him to depend on work for the obtaining of his livelihood, and that makes all the difference.

We have said enough to show that Mr. Heath might have produced a very ingenious disquisition upon the state of opinion in regard to land in England at the present time. He could have gone abroad too, and shown that the best return per acre does not invariably mean the most contented population; for he would find in Belgium, where the land is intensively cultivated, that it is also cut up into very small portions and the cultivators are most miserable and wretched. He might also have looked back into history and shown that British agriculture has emerged from the small farming system which never paid and never can be remunerative. It would be difficult to point to any new feature in the situation which is going to procure a different result.

We have not made much comment upon the general text of Mr. Heath, because, to be frank, it does not seem to possess any great value. Apparently he is one of those who endeavour to reduce the facts about labour to an impossible exactitude. Where he succeeds it is by copying from the excellent work done by the late Mr. Wilson Fox; but even that great collector of facts requires to be taken judiciously. From many conversations with him, the present writer knows that Mr. Wilson Fox himself considered many of the statistics he collected approximate, or even hypothetical. The little budgets of facts which the labourer is willing to supply are, in the majority of cases, inaccurate; else how could it be that, whereas the general average of wages for England is about sixteen shillings, the average total outlay for food for labourers' families is given as 13s. 6d.? It is ridiculous. But the truth is that much of the food is paid for indirectly. We remember a case, some years ago, in which a lady who wished, for reasons of her own, to stay at a cottage in the North of England, was amazed when, at the end of a fortnight she wished to pay her bill, to find that an infinitesimal charge was made for her lodging and scarcely anything for food. On remonstrating with the industrious peasant woman, who had made her extremely comfortable, she was met with the astonishing reply that the fresh meat was all in the bill, and that it would be very unfair to charge for milk and eggs and ham and bacon, because they cost nothing. The woman was not a student of political economy, evidently; but these things cost very little under good management, and to insert them in the family budget under market prices leads to very great confusion. The statistical method, in fact, is not one that lends itself to a satisfactory picture of the real condition of the working-classes in Great Britain. Nor will any statement of their wages be more effective. There is a class of writer who think that misery and low wages go together. It is a delusion. Often the merriest and happiest people are those whose possessions are of the slightest.

TOO METAPHYSICAL.

Highways and Hedges. Painted by Berenger Bengel, described by Herbert A. Morrah.

"IT is the old quarrel between peace and war. It is the eternal struggle between profit and sacrifice." These words of wisdom are quoted from a picture book on highways and hedges. If we open another page at random we come on a disquisition of pure poetry, and are told that in these days "poetry itself is at a discount." In another passage the author becomes almost lyrical, and bursts forth, "Fortunate tenth, the unthinking cry, and cluster round the attractive branch like bees in swarming time." Each to his own taste; but Mr. Morrah would have written a more delightful book if his mind had been less occupied with abstract philosophy and more with the simple sights and sounds of the highways and hedges of England. Observation, too, would have suited Mr. Berenger Bengel's pictures much better than pure disquisition.

MR. ALFRED TENNYSON'S NOVEL.

A Portentous History. by Alfred Tennyson. (Heinemann.)

SOMETIMES it is a misfortune to be the descendant of a man of genius. Much is expected of the grandson of the late Laureate, and all the greater, therefore, will be the disappointment. For with the best will in the world it is impossible to find much to praise in *A Portentous History*. Mr. Tennyson has staged his drama in a little Scottish hamlet, which he describes, apparently, altogether from books. From the fact that one of the children talks about a broken nose being "as red as a tomaty," it is comparatively easy to date the time and action, for the tomato is of much more recent introduction to the ordinary diet in Scotland than is usually believed; but the school at which the expression is used could scarcely have existed in the time of the first George, far less in the late Victorian era. If it had been correct, it would still have been morbid and ridiculous to introduce sex relations between children of five and six years of age. The story itself is that of the development of a show giant in a village of quarrymen and

fishermen. It lacks that judgment which would have enabled the author to select incidents and details of a credible nature. Mr. Tennyson has obviously plenty of cleverness, perhaps too much; but he must try and try again before hoping to succeed in imaginative literature.

"UNVERSCHÄMTHEIT."

Anthea's Guest, by Mrs. Alfred Sidgwick. (Methuen.)

ANTHEA'S guest was a minx—a minx so unmitigated that we could find it in our hearts to regret that her creator deals with her after so lenient a fashion. The contempt of the decent people around her was not a result that would have troubled such a one as Lydia Jordan for a moment so long as she was left in the possession of the things she loved, and it is the only punishment meted out to her. All along the line the pretty, common, shrewd little parvenu triumphs over the stately, guileless Anthea, stealing first her lover, and finally her silly old uncle, her money, her position and her place itself. "Gegen Unverschämtheit hat man keine Waffen," but the only fault we have to find with the drawing of Anthea is that she really takes Lydia's shamelessness a little too meekly for so strong a character. Mr. Butter, too, and Jem, both indicated as men of breeding, surely succumb rather too easily? But Lydia herself is a triumph of consistency and decision, and the shrewd vulgarity of her fight for a footing is admirably drawn. The story is amusing, skilful and exceedingly readable, as all Mrs. Sidgwick's stories are bound to be; and if this last is not quite one of her best, it will in nowise detract from her high reputation.

AMERICAN CHILDREN.

Phoebe and Ernest, by Inez Haynes Gilmore. (Constable.)

BY English readers this simple but evidently accurate account of an American home will be read with interest. It bears the stamp of authenticity in all its chapters. Father, mother, son and daughter, the quartette is perfect, and the description of the phases through which the growing children pass, and their parents' sometimes rather dismayed efforts to cope with and control them, is full of humour and tenderness. The quartette had the best of hearts; and the mother, who is the most sympathetically drawn of the four, had all that patience and wisdom and understanding which belongs to real mothers the wide world over, whether in England or America or any other country. The story is welcome as showing a different picture of American children and American parents than that which is generally seen and accepted as universal by the outside world.

THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA.

The Long Roll, by Mary Johnston. (Constable.)

MISS JOHNSTON does not seem to have decided quite definitely which she intended to write—history as a novelist, or a novel as an historian; and her double aim produces a rather disjointed effect. One is not sure whether one is reading of a love-story with a war for a background, or of a war with a love-story for a background. As a matter of fact, it is war with a love-story in the background, whether it was so intended or not. The love is subordinate to the war; the lovers are dominated by one outstanding historical figure; the true tale of that ragged host, its desperate marches and counter-marches, its suffering and its heroism, completely overwhelms the fictional story of Allan the true man, and Judith Cary the noble woman, and Stafford the rejected lover who so nearly ruined the happiness of both. Stonewall Jackson is Miss Johnston's real hero, not Allan, nor Stafford, nor any other, and her story ends with his death. But as a direct consequence of this the story, as a story, suffers. The fictional characters are not finished. Their private and personal concerns are not sufficiently linked with the national concerns in which they are involved. They remain shadows. That very "breath of life" which Miss Johnston says in her preface she sought to achieve by using actual happenings as described in contemporary letters, diaries and records of the period, has, perhaps, proved too strong for her. It is a most difficult and tricky business, that welding of truth and fiction. The truth must take life and inspiration, as of a personal and original projection; the fiction must assume equal solidity, coherence and weight with fact. And perhaps a condition of success is that the writer must not be too much excited or moved over the truth, or he will scarcely find it possible to give as much value to his fiction. Even Miss Johnston's style seems a little submerged by the breathless events and mighty issues of her subject. One does not easily recognise the writer of "By Order of the Company" or of "The Old Dominion" amid these ejaculatory periods, these piling sentences, these mounting adjectives, these similes that still gasp behind the truth. Yet *The Long Roll* remains a noble piece of work, a striking record of a great struggle.

PAGEANTRY.

The House of Many Voices, by Bernard Capes. (T. Fisher Unwin.)

THIS is the most original story Mr. Capes has written. It is a mixture of first-rate sensationalism, excellent character-drawing, sound sense, considerable humour, real emotion and moving and human drama. It contains three stories, one within the other. One is of a neurotic man who, struck to earth by what he believes to be the treachery of his beloved brother and the girl he loves, spends thirty-two years as a deaf-mute in a haunted house with an extraordinary doctor, revenging himself on all mankind. The story comes to an end with the discovery in the Seine of one of those hollow balls by means of which Paris tried to communicate with the world during the siege. The particular ball, containing three hundred letters, among them one vindicating the love and loyalty of the vanished brother, came by some mishap and sank, to be dredged up thirty-two years later by a fisherman, and to send Roger Mason, repentant and remorseful, back to faith and his fellows. A second story tells, with one or two somewhat unnecessary episodes, of the highly erratic and eccentric love-affair of the extraordinary doctor and the beautiful heiress, Miss Burlingham. And the third story in the list, but the first in the book, is the charming tale of Patricia Beresford, the companion of Lady Elinor, and her doughty and lovable little champion, Sir James Penny. These stories are involved in a pageant, which provides a stage and a *raison d'être* for all the characters. Much of what happens is highly improbable, but it is none the less interesting for that; and Mr. Capes has to be congratulated on a first-rate novel.

BOOKS TO ORDER FROM THE LIBRARY.

Toddie, by Gilbert Watson. (Mills and Boon.)
Margaret Harding, by Perceval Gibbon. (Methuen.)
The Cost, by L. G. Moberley. (Mills and Boon.)
A Painter of Souls, by David Lisle. (Methuen.)

THE CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIP TEN.

ONE of the most coveted distinctions of the croquet year and a special ambition of every croquet expert is to play for the "Champion Cup." Only ten players are eligible for this event—the ten best players of the season. These ten are chosen by a committee of connoisseurs of croquet form, who do their work with a thoroughness that would put many selection committees in other spheres to the blush. Accordingly, there is little cavilling at their choice. For the most part the croquet world approves, while the players-elect know at least that neither fear nor favour has given them this honour. They have been chosen solely on merit, on their form to date. A player may win the championship by chance, by the kindly offices of good fortune, but not thus will he ever win a place among the champion ten. His place among this company of the *élite* can be won only by consistently good form and a succession of good performances during the part of the season which precedes the "Champion Cup." So the honour is wooed with much ardour and warmly appreciated when won.

The ten players chosen for the event this year, decided last week at Roehampton, were all drawn from the ranks of the gentlemen. Not a single lady was of the number, not even the incomparable Mrs. Beaton. Such an omission is very rare, at least in the later history of the event. In six of the previous seven years the ladies always had one or more representatives. A few years ago the supremacy of men was of doubtful stability. Mrs. Beaton and Miss Coote could hold their own with the best of them. And now none of the ladies is accounted worthy to be included among the ten best players.

What is the cause of this declension among the best ladies, if declension there has been, or of this advance by the men, if advance there has been? Possibly the pendulum stroke has something to do with the restored supremacy of the men. It was noticeable that of the ten players at Roehampton last week, no fewer than six employed the pendulum stroke. The exceptions were Messrs. Beaton, Whitaker, Lomas and Burton. Moreover it was the pendulum stroke that triumphed, the first three places being occupied by its exponents.

This method of swinging the mallet is impossible in the case of a lady, although one lady, Mrs. Weir, does, by placing one foot in advance of the other, use a species of pendulum stroke. As superior accuracy in the short game is claimed for this pendulum stroke, many ladies, to whom it would probably come as the most natural and easiest method, are heavily handicapped in being prevented from its use. If this does not commend itself as a possible and part explanation of the present supremacy of men, then, perhaps, the explanation may be found in the swing of that other pendulum, the familiar metaphor of politics and kindred spheres.

The features of last week's competition at Roehampton were the excellence of the play and the keenness of the struggle. As compared with ladies' croquet, the play was much more rapid and the games far shorter. From the outset Mr. H. Maxwell Browne



LORD DONERAILE.



PRESIDENT OF THE OXFORD CROQUET UNION.

played a strong game and showed a masterly control of the balls. For three days he led the field. On the fourth day he was caught by Mr. C. L. O'Callaghan, two of the eighteen rounds remaining to be played. In the seventeenth round the latter went down to Mr. Beaton, whereas Mr. Maxwell Browne defeated Mr. Burton. So, could Mr. Maxwell Browne but win his last game, the cup was his. But this he failed to do, losing narrowly to Mr. E. Whitaker. As Mr. O'Callaghan had Mr. C. Corbally against him in his last game, Mr. Browne still had a chance. Mr. O'Callaghan, however, won this game and tied with Mr. Maxwell Browne for first place with 13 wins. On playing off, the latter won by 18 and 24. This match, being of an International character, created much interest, its result—a victory for England—proving very popular. The order of the other competitors was: Mr. P. Duff Mathews, 12; Mr. E. Whitaker, 12; Mr. R. C. J. Beaton, 11; Mr. C. Corbally, 9; Mr. A. Rayden Stone, 9; Mr. J. E. H. Lomas, 5; Mr. R. Bloxsome, 3; and Mr. B. H. Burton, 3. Some of the best and most brilliant croquet of the week was shown by Mr. E. Whitaker, the present



CAPTAIN LLEWELYN.

holder of the championship. In successive rounds he beat Messrs. C. Corbally, R. C. J. Beaton and C. L. O'Callaghan.

LORD DONERAILE.

The moving spirit of the croquet world is Lord Doneraile. His connection with the game dates a long way back. Elected to the committee of the Croquet Association in 1899, he became its chairman in 1906, a position he still occupies. The present prosperity of the Croquet Association is largely due to his energy and business capacity, while the game owes not a little of its popularity to his enthusiasm and initiative. Any new and popular departure in the game is usually to be traced to Lord Doneraile. The International match and the Ladies' Champion Cup, both new events this season, are examples of this. His mathematical turn of mind is responsible for all the elaborate and wonderful schemes which certain competitions on the American principle require for their proper working. As a player he remains at six bisques. Doubtless this figure could be substantially reduced

did he not sacrifice himself and his time so much to work in connection with the game.

CAPTAIN LLEWELYN.

It is a remarkable tribute to the merits of croquet that so peaceful and placid a game should win so many followers from among men of war and men of action. Captain Llewelyn is a good example of this. A soldier, and Chief Constable for the County of Wiltshire, he plays croquet with much keenness and skill. He is a half-bisquer, who gave a taste of his quality at the recent Windlesham Tournament by beating Mr. R. Bloxsome, one of this year's champion ten.

THE HON. MRS. LAWRENCE.

President of the Oxford Croquet Union, the Hon. Mrs. Lawrence was responsible for the Oxfordshire team which took part in the County Championship Meeting at Hurlingham this year. She is enthusiastic in the cause of croquet and a good player with a graceful style.

EUSTACE E. WHITE.

ON THE GREEN.

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON AND BERNARD DARWIN.

WATERED AND UNWATERED GREENS.

WE had the Walton Heath Artisans' Club at Ashdown Forest the other day playing our own Working Men's Club, so-called—as if we were not all working-men!—and also known as the Cantelupe Club. They were without Ritchie, their big man last year, who has now gone to Worpleston, and had to suffer

in a more peaceful and less exciting fashion, than ever before. There is much consolation in all this, though it is of a pathetic kind. But it is something, and the consolations of declining golfing powers are not so many that we can afford to neglect even the least of them.

INFALLIBLE RECIPE FOR HOLING SHORT PUTTS.

We hear curious things and receive strange counsels. The latest and most



MR. LIONEL MUNN.

a bad hammering, chiefly at the hands of the Mitchell clan. But what was interesting in the match was their criticism of our course, for they spoke of it as quite verdant, though the green, compared with theirs, was as brown as a berry—though apparently not as brown as Walton Heath; but as for the putting greens themselves—unspeakable! The fact is that the greens are wonderfully good, considering that we have no means, except a cart, for watering them, and that the sky had quite struck watering for months and months; but at Walton Heath they have, of course, water laid on to every putting green. Now, it is wonderful how easy golf becomes if you have the course very keen, but the putting greens nice and heavy, and heaviest of all just about the hole. This is what generally happens in a dry summer when you can water the greens *ad libitum*. It does not matter how strong, within limits, you play your approach putt, the ball will always come to rest in the heavy grass (relatively speaking) near the hole. On the other hand, if you have no water to lay on, you cannot very well, for one thing, change the hole. You have to leave it in one place, a place that gets worn barer and keener every day, a place that is much the keenest on the whole green, and the case is just the very converse of that other—if you do not get the strength of the approach stroke absolutely right, so as to take the ball just the length of this keenest patch and yet not to go beyond it, nobody except St. Andrew, or some such supernaturally gifted golfer, can tell, on sloping greens, such as are many of these on Ashdown Forest, where that ball will come to a standstill. Putting is largely a matter of guesswork and of language—to which the ball pays no attention.

REALISATION OF AN ANCIENT SAYING.

"To enjoy golf we must not mind if we are beaten, but to improve at golf we must mind tremendously if we are beaten." That is a truth which I have only assimilated in the later years of a long golfing life, for previously I had no experience of the former and more enjoyable state—I always minded tremendously. And minding so greatly meant that one tried greatly, and by greatly trying improvement, to a point, came. Now that that point has been reached and passed, golfing life becomes tolerable only on the condition of not minding; and once that condition is attained, golf becomes really more enjoyable, though

singular that has come my way is that of a man who, in all earnestness, has recommended, as an infallible recipe for holing a short putt, shutting both eyes while the stroke is being made. His theory was that if you took your stance correctly and laid the blade of the putter fair and square behind the ball in addressing it, you then could make the stroke much more truly, and with much less fear of being misled by false attractions of the eye, if you kept both eyes firmly closed. Once, long ago, a man told me that he had found out what a friend of his, who was much off his driving, was doing wrong. Standing in front of him he was able to observe that each time his club came to the ball he closed both eyes firmly. The player was quite unconscious that he thus obliterated all vision of the ball, though he confessed the crime when charged with it, and when he tried to play with open eyes he made much improvement. His state was entirely different from that of this player who deliberately closes both eyes before he strikes the ball for a short putt and commends the plan as a counsel of perfection to all and sundry. He does not claim that the plan is a good one for the longer putts—those in which the club has to be drawn away any distance from the ball before striking. In this case he seems to think that a sight of the ball really is wanted, in order to guide the club back to the ball accurately. Now the extraordinary thing about this man's counsel for the short putts is, absurd as it sounds, that it often works out quite well in practice. It is wonderful what a number of the short putts you will hole in this shut-eyed fashion. Go out and try it.

H. G. H.

A GOOD FRESHMAN FOR OXFORD.

Among the other rather scanty items of golfing intelligence is another score that must surely be a remarkable one, a round of 65 by Mr. R. H. Corbett at Mullion in Cornwall. I do not know Mullion, though I am told that it is a very charming and natural course; but, assuming a measure of short holes, 65 is a fairly good score anywhere, especially when it is done under conditions of card and pencil. I observe with interest that Mr. Corbett is going up to Oxford in October; I do not observe it with pleasure, because if he makes a practice of doing rounds of this character it would be much better if he went to Cambridge. It almost seems as if by some mysterious law of Nature Oxford always has the

best of it in the matter of these brilliant freshmen, while Cambridge golfers mature more slowly. I can very well remember the alarm of the Cambridge team of 1896 when we heard that Mr. (now Captain) W. A. Henderson had gone up to Oxford, that he had already knocked out of a championship the great Mr. Mure Fergusson, and had given a hard game to Mr. Leslie Balfour-Melville. It was almost incredibly terrifying. Then Mr. Horace Hutchinson was doubtless once a freshman, so was Mr. Alexander Stuart, and in later times they have had such golfers as the late Mr. J. A. T. Bramston, Mr. Guy Ellis, Mr. Hooman and others, who were really fine players before they went up. Cambridge, of course, have had the unique honour of possessing a freshman who was amateur champion, Mr. Gordon Barry, and he, oddly enough, never won a match against Oxford.

RUSSIAN SCANDAL.

The lightest words of great champions are reverently treasured; they are also sometimes misquoted till they go far to ruin the game of an innocent, though foolish, victim. I was playing a day or two ago with a friend, not a very good player, who pointed out with pride his system of mashie play. It consisted in not turning the wrists, and so the club-head, away from the ball in the orthodox way, but in lifting up the club with the face turned in and the left wrist bent, after the manner of an inferior female lawn tennis player taking a back-hand stroke. The result was not particularly happy, but the possessor of the system was quite serene because he had got it from a man who learned it from a friend who had learned it from Taylor. Now, if there is one thing certain, it is that Taylor can never have said anything of the sort; but his original observation, whatever it was, has gradually been distorted by a process of repetition analogous to the game of "Russian scandal." I should like to know two things—first, what Taylor really did say, and, secondly, what at the Day of Judgment will be his precise degree of responsibility—if any—for the perversion of my unfortunate friend.

VARDON AGAIN.

Some little while ago we were solemnly informed by cable that a certain professional's score in a competition in America was a "record" for seventy-two

player as to whom I would so willingly take the risk of prophesying that he will ultimately win it; that is to say, if his work at the Irish Bar will allow him to take his holidays at the championship season. Not long ago, it will be remembered, Mr. Munn, in partnership with Mr. Beveridge, won his match by means of the most gallant spurt in the Gentlemen v. Players match at Sandwich, and so saved the amateurs from the very worst that could befall them, an absolutely blank scoring sheet. Mr. Munn's native heath is the very excellent nine-hole course at Buncrana, but he has also played a great deal of his golf on the Dublin courses, and in his spare moments has also played three-quarter-back for Trinity College, Dublin.

B. D.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FEEDING THE YOUNG GANNET.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The gannet is extremely chary in feeding its young if it has the slightest suspicion of being observed. One may sit quite near them on the nests without much notice being taken, that is, as long as one remains motionless. But to witness the feeding operation at close quarters one must be well concealed and, above all, endowed with an unlimited stock of patience and the ability to maintain a cramped posture for hours on end amid most insalubrious surroundings, where the odours of a thousand nests are not quite those of Araby. Lugging a heavy photographic outfit day after day up and down a hundred feet rope without any practical results is certainly discouraging; but I had witnessed the abortive attempts of many veteran bird-hunters in this direction, and as the operation had never been photographically depicted, I determined to persevere, and after not a few disappointments was ultimately rewarded. The parents of the fledgeling which I selected as a likely subject at first absolutely refused to feed it while I remained in the vicinity, the feeding being probably effected in the early morning or in the evening. I then had recourse to muzzling

the young one over-night in the hope that it would be fed when the muzzle was removed next day. This plan, however, had the effect of rendering the old birds extremely suspicious and did not prove as successful as I anticipated. Success came ultimately through sheer persistence in familiarising the birds with my presence in that particular spot, and for the time being becoming part and parcel of the cliff face. The fledgeling which I was endeavouring to photograph in the act of dining had always one of the parent birds in attendance, which, in this instance, from its demeanour and complete bleaching of the buff colouring on the head and neck I judged to be the female. Frequently the youngster clamoured for food in the most beseeching manner, whining and tapping pleadingly with its bill on that of the parent without avail. The mother, being evidently without supplies, kept her head averted from her offspring's importunities and her attention directed seawards in anxious expectation of her mate's return. It was most interesting to witness how quickly and unerringly they both recognised the return of the provider among the wheeling thousands that floated in front of the rookery. I could always be certain by their actions that in a few moments supplies would be forthcoming. Both birds became quite excited, the youngster assuming the erect posture

of the mother, their heads twisting in spirals as their eyes followed the circling flight of the returning bird, which after a few preliminary turns round the rookery came straight at the nest like a whirlwind, nearly upsetting his partner as he landed. Loud cackling and clashing of bills expressed their delight, while the youngster whined loudly for recognition. There being barely room for the three birds on the nest, the mother hopped on to an adjoining one, and immediately the newcomer began to feed the fledgeling. Just before commencing, the male bird, whose head and neck colouring was still quite pronounced, emitted a peculiar noise I have never heard at any other time, and which closely resembled the subdued neighing of a horse. This was accompanied with a gulping movement of the throat to bring the food into position, and then the bill was opened to its fullest extent—which means a gape of fully three inches across. Immediately the invitation was accepted by the youngster popping its head into the gullet of the parent, which by vigorous resistance pressed the young one down on the nest till the upper mandible was prodding it in the back in its efforts to transfer the delicacies purveyed, and, be it fresh herring or mackerel, the swallowing was effected before the head was withdrawn, even as the old birds swallow their prey first hand before appearing on the surface of the water after diving. Several visits were thus made to the parental larder before the youngster was again content to settle in the nest and placidly resume nibbling the feathers of its wings and tail sprouting from the downy blanket in which it was swathed, the old bird occasionally assisting while standing guard until relieved by its foraging mate.—J. M. CAMPBELL.

SLEEP AND MOONLIGHT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—During this hot weather I, like many others, am sleeping out of doors. During the recent period of full moon my head one night was exposed to its rays, and I was conscious in sleep of discomfort sufficient to cause wakefulness. Hearing that others have felt the same, I write to ask whether the moon's rays



POPPING ITS HEAD INTO THE GULLET OF THE PARENT.

holes. The statement is a singularly unmeaning and futile one, since the value of any record must depend on the course upon which it is accomplished. Personally, I am seriously contemplating cutting three holes upon an exiguous strip of lawn in front of the window and putting round them twenty-four times in the confident expectation of beating that American gentleman and setting up a new world's record. Meanwhile, until I have done it, I fancy that Vardon's 279 for seventy-two holes at Baden-Baden must be very nearly a record; at any rate, we may guess that the score was a very remarkable one from the fact that Herd, who was second, was nine strokes away and that the others of a large and strong field straggled still further behind. It appears that the Baden-Baden course is not quite five thousand yards in length; but, at any rate, so good a player, as Ray needed seventy-nine for his first round, so that it cannot be so desperately easy. That Vardon should be able to beat everyone so decisively on a short course shows that there cannot have been anything to complain of in his much-discussed putting. That tiresome right wrist of his, which has so often obstinately insisted on stiffening itself when the ball lay four feet from the hole, must have behaved like an angel, and as long as it does so, nobody except Vardon is particularly likely to win.

MR. LIONEL MUNN.

It will not be long before Mr. Munn is once more defending his title of open Irish champion against all comers at Portmarnock. He has already won this tournament twice running—a big feather in anybody's cap—and it would not be at all surprising if he won it yet again, for he is a magnificent golfer. He has a very fine style, with a particularly inspiring measure of deliberation about it, great power and an admirable, painstaking temperament; one more phlegmatic, moreover, than is usually given to the Celt. It was in 1908 at Sandwich that Mr. Munn first played in the amateur championship, and he received an unequalled baptism of fire, for he did not lose to Mr. C. A. Palmer till the twenty-eighth hole, all the first nine extra holes being halved. He has never yet penetrated very far through that tournament, but there is no young



NINETY YEARS.

[The trees were very probably planted about 1820. Elms in the park grow quickly; two-inch girth increase is common the first fifty years, and then the rate decreases. The cedar is a tree which even exceeds this rate of girth increase.—ED.]

FRUIT BOTTLING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Few fruits are more easily procurable than the various kinds of plums, and certainly none are more easily preserved by bottling or retain their full freshness and flavour, even after being kept under such conditions for several years; and unquestionably few things are more suited to the general taste and are always highly appreciated when fresh fruits are much less plentiful than during the summer and autumn. It has been my privilege and pleasure to bottle these on a very large scale. I have tested nearly all of the best-known varieties, and though I have found all more or less to lend themselves admirably to this treatment, there are undoubtedly some varieties that are very much to be preferred, which I will name hereafter. Selecting the fruit: It is highly important that the fruits should be selected at the right moment; just when they are

are known scientifically to have an effect upon sleepers, and, if so, do animals feel it also? My dog awoke too, and moved for a time into the shade; but our joint experience proves little unless it can be widely confirmed.—L. EVESON SCARLE.

WYCH ELMS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—In the park here there are some wych elms. I enclose photographs of two of these. The first tree measures eleven feet two and a-half inches in girth, and the second, ten feet ten and a-half inches four feet from the ground. There is no record as to when these were planted. Can you give any estimate of their probable age?—WILLIAM N. WALKER, Pitlair, Springfield, Fife.



AN AGED ELM.

on the verge of ripeness. They should be of uniform size, perfectly sound, and used in a dry condition. The fruits must not be roughly handled to rub off the beautiful bloom more than possible. Pack evenly and closely together in the bottles, and for preference sterilise without sugar, though this should be added, if necessary. They should be sterilised precisely in the same way as other firm stoned fruits, making absolutely certain that the bottles are perfectly air tight before putting them away in the store cupboard. The varieties I recommend are the old Greengage, Jefferson's, Kirke Blue, Early Rivers, Monarch,

Victoria, Golden Gage and The Czar. All kinds of damsons and bullaces may be treated in the same way. Pears.—These are not often chosen for bottling purposes, but, nevertheless, they make a pleasing change and add variety and are first-rate when properly done. Select small to medium-sized fruits before they commence to ripen. These should be peeled and either done whole or cut into halves, leaving the stalks intact, and pleasingly arranged in the bottles for the sake of appearance. A small quantity of best cane sugar may be added to these, and heat to the same temperature as previously recommended.—E. J. B.

SKINS AND FEATHERS BY THE TON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In the list of imported goods detained on board ship and in the docks and warehouses of London during the recent strike, six hundred and eighteen tons of bird skins and feathers are included. Yet persons with pecuniary interest in the plumage trade would have it believed that the plumes used for millinery purposes are either dyed feathers from the poultry-yard, or artificial products of which horsehair is a component part.—ELLA FULLER MAITLAND.

A CHANCE FOR SCOTLAND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can any readers of COUNTRY LIFE suggest a place in Switzerland for winter sports as good in every way as St. Moritz; but quieter, less expensive and not such a long journey? Is it true that St. Moritz is far and away the best in point of height, ice, etc.? If so, can anyone recommend a good hotel that is not too expensive, giving an idea of terms?—M. K. T.

THE MATERNAL INSTINCT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph which may interest your readers. The main feature is a buff Orpington hen who took over the duties of mother to a litter of eleven foxhound puppies. The mother produced her litter in the barn where the hen was laying. The latter got nearer each day to lay her egg, and on the fifth day we found her hovering the whole litter while the mother lay peacefully alongside. She covered the whole litter till they grew too big for her, then she would cover ten, while the odd man had to sit on her back. It was curious to see her calling them to their pan at feeding-time or very often clucking hard to get them to eat a bit of corn. It was very sad to see her when the puppies



THE HEN AND HER ADOPTED FAMILY.

were taken away and sent out to their walks. The light was too bad in the barn to get a good photograph of her on the ten with the little one on her back and the little heads of the others peeping out from under her wing. This photograph is not very good, but you can see the old hen.—E. J. W. P. PRYSE.

WHO WAS JOHN SQUIRE?

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I lately purchased a small picture of a horse, on the back of which is written "John Squire, 1833." The figure of the horse has the appearance of a black silhouette, but is done in some sort of black paint, the background of the picture being a pencil drawing of a house and some trees. Can any of your readers tell me whether John Squire was a well-known owner or breeder of horses, or an artist?—J. DE VITRE.

EARWIG-LIKE CONDUCT OF A FLY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—One often hears that earwigs will occasionally creep into people's ears and cause great pain and discomfort. I knew, in fact, of a case of this which happened in Shetland. A man had lain down and gone to sleep in a boat, and a wandering earwig went down his ear while he slept, and was only got out with great difficulty, after the patient had been almost maddened by the irritation and pain. The other day, while I was forcing my way through some lilac bushes, a small fly fell into my ear and at once proceeded to creep in as far as it could. The sensation was exceedingly unpleasant; the insect had evidently got close up to the drum, and its complaining buzz and struggles to escape were magnified a thousand-fold, and it seemed as though a whole hive of angry bees were swarming in my head. Violent syringing with warm water was at once resorted to, and this had the effect of gradually drowning the fly. With each successive syringing I could feel its movements getting fainter and fainter, and at last it only gave a small wriggle at intervals of twenty or thirty seconds. At last an extra vigorous squirt washed the fly out, and I was quite surprised to see how small it was. It was a delicate little insect with gauzy wings, and only about as big as a large mosquito. This unpleasant experience has quite convinced me that the stories which nurses tell children about earwigs are very little exaggerated, and that one of these formidable insects would, if it penetrated into the depths of the ear, like my fly did, cause almost insufferable torture. The strong legs and elongated shape would also make an earwig very difficult to dislodge by mere syringing, nor would the stream of water drown and quiet it as in the case of a fly.—FLEUR-DE-LYS.



A VILLAGE PUMP.

s altogether and hopelessly futile; the gentleman flaps in at the window in battalions, upsetting the decorum of even the most austere breakfast-table. His reputation to the contrary, the wasp is not a bellicose soldier of fortune with his sword always drawn; still, the whirr of innumerable wings is disquieting and robs eating of all its pleasure. The usual expedients seem every one of them equally futile. A gallipot with a little jam or beer in it is a safe trap, but it is also a safe attraction to all the wasps for miles round. Sticky papers are a delusion, since the flies also are fatally inclined towards them, and the death-beat of their wings is too sad a dirge. I see that Gilbert White in the hot summer of 1783 caught thousands of wasps with hazel twigs tipped with bird-lime, and "kept the marauders under." Fixed across the open window such a device promises well. The same expedient, arranged in the neighbourhood of our fruit trees, may save to us somewhat of our fruit. At present the plums that the drought has spared are being attacked by the wasps in myriads, and the apples will not escape unless we can think of some such plan to scotch the wasp wholesale. In default of other food, the bees are also planning a campaign against our fruit. I remember in the great heat of August and September, 1906, the pears from a gigantic Caller Rose fell in bushels, and my bees made a Bacchanalian orgy on the decaying fruit. They drank themselves into stupefaction, lay helpless in hundreds, revived and returned to the feast with a gait decidedly unsteady.—W.

WASPS AND UNHEALTHY ELM TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have been interested by "F. W. H.'s" letter in your issue of August 5th on "Wasps and Unhealthy Elm Trees," as for some days two small elm trees on my lawn have been overrun with wasps and large flies. The insects appear to be attracted by some sticky substance exuding from the bark of the trees. The trees, though suffering from the prolonged drought, do not appear to be in any way unhealthy.—C. F. E.

FROGS IN A WELL.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—Is it not a little remarkable that while none of us, in this phenomenally dry summer, has so much as seen the trail of a worm, frogs are plentiful enough? I have a rather interesting little problem to propound, which some naturalist may be good enough to solve. My house is on a hilltop, and the whole of our

AN INTERESTING RELIC.

[TO THE EDITOR.]
SIR,—I am sending you a photograph of an old pump still being used in a house at Midhurst, Sussex.—A. S. GANDY.

WASPS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—Short of turning out every nest, is there any way of dealing with the wasp? Nests are not easy to discover, and, when found, demand a courage in action the novice does not always command. One knows what the naturalist will say—hunt out the queen wasps in the early spring and destroy them. The occasion is not one for a lament over a duty forgotten or a resolution as to a duty to be piously undertaken next year; it is, what can be done to mitigate the plague which is upon us? To think of wiping out the wasp by single combat

water has to be lifted by hand from a well a hundred and twenty feet deep. Commonly, at all seasons of the year, but notably just now, we often bring up in the pail a frog or two, some quite large, many very tiny. When turned out on to the ground they promptly leap down the well again and seem to come to no hurt, for dead frogs are never brought up. As we should expect, the specimens are very light in colour and the smaller ones almost transparent; but the large frogs have the familiar markings quite distinct. The perplexity is that at no time are tadpoles brought to the surface, leaving the inference that the frogs do not spawn in the well, but when mature leap down. Yet how do they get down in such numbers, and what becomes of the larger frogs, and why are so many wee frogs found if the eggs are not laid and hatched in the well?—G. H.

A BREEM MALFORMED.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of a common river fish (the bream) that differs from all others of its species, inasmuch as it seems to possess two distinct mouths, one situated directly below the other, and both perfectly formed. This curiosity was caught by Mr. A. Davies when fishing in the river Foss at York on August 29th last, and measures seven inches in length. How it became the owner of two mouths to feed requires much thought in settlement, and so far I have not arrived at any probable satisfactory explanation. The fish is being set up by a local firm of taxidermists, and can shortly be seen by anyone interested in ichthyology.—SYDNEY H. SMITH.



ABNORMAL BREEM.

[Similarly malformed fish we have seen before—a congenital malformation; but we are quite sure the specimen in question has not *two mouths*. What is taken for an upper mouth is probably a deep cleft between the snout and the upper jaw.—E.D.]

A GREY MULLET CAUGHT IN THE "WORKS."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The grey mullet illustrated was picked up by Pilot Collins in the harbour. When found the spines of the dorsal fin were covered with a vigorous growth of weed, as also was the pectoral fin on the right side. Weeds, too, were growing on the back behind the dorsal fin. Unfortunately the fish had been cleaned before I saw it, but the photograph clearly shows the remains of the weed on the spines and back. On the right side of the fish, about the middle, the scales are worn, and the skin is polished as if by friction; the bottom of the tail also shows wear. It would appear that this mullet in some way became jammed in the "works," and must have been living, held firmly, for weeks, fed by chance morsels of sewage carried by the tide. It probably owed its release to the wear of its flesh by abrasion on the left side, as the photograph shows. To me the occurrence appears extraordinary. Can it be matched in the experience of any of your readers? The fish is thirteen inches long, and weighs three-quarters of a pound. I have it in formalin.—C. E. WIDDOWSON, Littlehampton.



JAMMED IN THE "WORKS."

A BIG PLANT IN A LITTLE GARDEN.

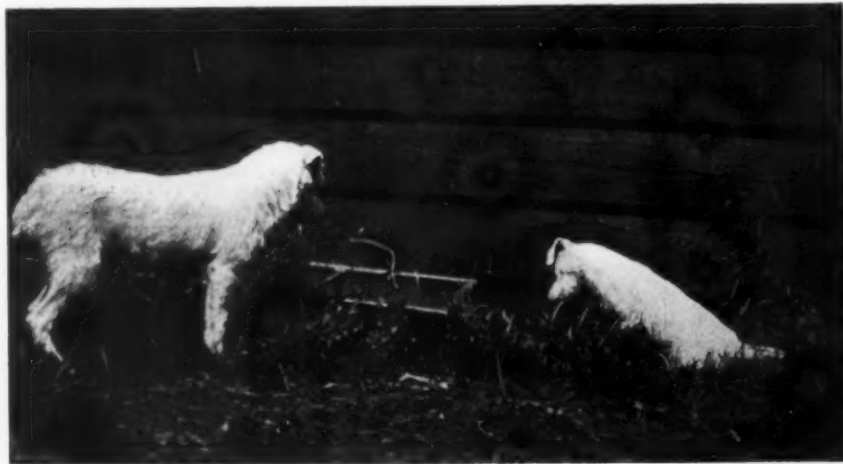
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have grown in my little garden, which is four feet long, and is a portion of mother's garden which gets very little sun, a tobacco plant which is thirty-four inches high, largest leaf fifteen inches long and ten inches wide, and the stem is two inches in circumference. I take a great interest in my garden, and as it is so small and is difficult to get anything to grow in it, I thought this an exceptionally large plant of its kind.—LANGTON EARLE (age thirteen).

TERRIERS AT WORK.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I herewith enclose an instantaneous photograph, taken by myself, of terriers at work, which I think may perhaps be suitable for publication in your pages.—J. P. HERMON-HODGE.



GOOD WORKERS.

